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THE PARLIAMENTARY PARTY AND THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT IN IRELAND 1912-1918
"THE PARLIAMENTARY PARTY AND THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT IN IRELAND, 1912 - 1918"

A THESIS

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By

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THE STAGING
The year 1912, a year when the initials I.R.A. still stood for the Irish Rifle Association, was a year of triumph for the Irish Parliamentary Party and for its leader, John Redmond. Home Rule was finally in sight. The House of Lords, the barrier which had stopped Gladstone's last Home Rule measure, could now do no more than delay the new Bill. As long as the Liberals remained in power Home Rule would become law in 1914, and with the support of the Irish Parliamentary Party in the House of Commons there seemed to be no reason for the Liberals to give up office in the interim. In Ireland there had been some dismay after 1910 when the Government had chosen to press the Insurance Bill ahead of Home Rule. This was less a manifestation of lack of fervour in Home Rule than an indication that the Government was fully conscious of its dependence on the Irish Party and wanted to ensure its support for the Insurance measure as well as pacify some of its own followers who looked upon Home Rule without enthusiasm. This was a minor set back, and it left the Irish Parliamentary Party unshaken. Its popularity in Ireland had remained very high since 1910, when Home Rule had become a Government commitment. During these years separatist organizations declined in popular esteem as they were perceived as challenges to the Party.
Piaras Beaslai, a "physical force" separatist, described with unconcealed dismay the state of Irish public opinion in 1911:

Young Irishmen of today can hardly conceive the atmosphere of the Ireland of that time, nor the contempt and dislike with which the majority of the Irish people looked upon the advocates of physical force. Even the pacifist Sinn Feiner, who contented himself with working for the language, industries, sports, and music of Ireland, was sneered at, despised, dubbed 'crank', and howled down if he dared express disagreement with the policy of the Irish Parliamentary Party. The blind faith in the Irish Party, and the efficacy of their methods was almost pathetic.¹

In 1912 this faith in the Irish Parliamentary Party and its methods seemed well founded; and with the exception of the Irish Republican Brotherhood physical force extremists, it affected most nationalists to some extent. Even the Sinn Feiners became confident that the Party would win some measure of self-government. Inevitably from their point of view this would be inadequate, but from 1910 on Sinn Fein seemed willing to allow the Irish Party to extract as much as it could from the British Government and to work within the new structures to try and enlarge the scope of self-government.

Only a few years later, in 1918, Home Rule had failed to become law and a demoralized Irish Parliamentary Party was contemptuously rejected by the Irish electorate which had shown such faith in it. Party leaders and representatives, heroes in 1912, were sneered at, despised, dubbed 'traitors

to Ireland', and howled down if they expressed reservations about separatism or the efficacy of extra-constitutional methods. The reversal in public opinion was almost total. The forces which contributed to this reversal originated from diverse sources: The weaknesses in the position of the Irish Party itself both in Ireland and at Westminster, the strength of the Irish-Ireland movement, the fanatical dedication to a cause on the part of a small number of members of the I.R.B., the solidarity in the face of adversity of the Ulster Protestant community, the impact of contemporary history and the performance of the British Government in the situation of crisis at home and in Europe. The importance of this last factor was underlined in Brian Inglis's conclusion that:

All the strands of nationalism, in fact, loosely knotted as they were, could never have provided the rope by which the Irish people were to climb to political independence, if the policy of killing Home Rule by kindness had been more consistently adopted; for the speed and manner of their climb were determined less by the I.R.B. than by the policy, or lack of policy, of the Government.2

The failure of the British Government was closely related in part to the insensitivity of the Irish Parliamentary Party to urban discontent. This failure to take account of and to respond to urban discontent would cost the Government and the Party dearly. Sinn Fein, the Gaelic League, the leadership of the I.R.B., and later organizations of an anomic character such as MacNeill's Irish Volunteers and the Irish Citizen

2The Story of Ireland (London, Faber and Faber, 1965), p. 98.
Army were urban-based and sustained by urban discontent. The British Government maintained surveillance on the activities of such organizations prior to 1916, but it attempted neither their effective suppression nor the alleviation of the root malaise. Then, following the explosion of essentially urban violence in the 1916 Easter Rising, it was the British reaction which spread the discontent to the countryside. The continued failure to relieve this spreading discontent then led to the final breakdown in political communications represented by the results of the 1918 General Election.

The Home Rule movement in the early twentieth century represented a reformist urge though a fairly radical one. It demanded the implementation of an alternative system to the existing governmental organization of Ireland but without rejecting a British connexion or even the legislative supremacy of the Imperial Parliament at Westminster. This Irish movement for political reform enjoyed the broad support of the Roman Catholic Church and of the vast majority of the Roman Catholic population of the country. In the years immediately following 1910, when the movement's success seemed assured, the passive alienation from politics which had followed upon the death of Parnell was considerably reduced to the detriment of Sinn Fein, the even more radical reformist organization. There was naturally no prospect of reconciling

\[3\text{Ibid., p. 97. See also Anthony D. Smith, } \text{Theories of Nationalism, op. cit., p. 63.}\]
the fringe of revolutionaries fanatically dedicated to a principle of physical violence, but they remained a very small number. This extremist fringe was, however, being reorganized at this time around the person of Tom Clarke whose personal grievances against the existing system included fifteen years of harsh treatment while imprisoned as a dynamitard and failure in two bids for local government posts, one as clerk of the Rathdown Union and one as Superintendent of the Dublin Abbatoirs, in both of which he had the support not only of the Irish Amnesty Association but of John Redmond himself. Clarke was apparently, according to his biographer, a man of fanatical disposition before these reinforcing experiences. Despite the fanatical zeal for their vision of Ireland and the hatred for England manifested by the I.R.B. leadership, the movement made little headway in gaining popular support against the Irish Parliamentary Party as long as the Party seemed firmly in possession of the means to bring about Home Rule and while the general satisfaction at the benefits derived from the land legislation persisted.

The I.R.B. during these years continued to pursue its fateful policy of infiltrating organizations such as the G.A.A., the Gaelic League and Sinn Fein though it did not


achieve outright control of these. One of the most open revolutionary organizations ideologically linked with the I.R.B. at this time was Na Fianna Eireann. Na Fianna Eireann had been founded in 1909 through the joint efforts of Bulmer Hobson, an important figure in the I.R.B., and Countess Markievicz. It was a youth organization and loosely modelled on Baden Powell's Boy Scouts but dedicated to "re-establish the Independence of Ireland". The major feature which distinguished the Fianna from the Boy Scouts was that the training which the boys received was primarily military with a strong emphasis on the use of arms. The movement remained quite small but it provided, as was Bulmer Hobson's intention, a reserve of militarily trained young men for the I.R.B. who would later exercise an influence disproportionate to their small numbers on the Irish National Volunteers when these were founded in 1913. As a military-style organization relying on the indoctrination of youth and their training in the use of offensive weapons for ends which were not then sanctioned by the majority of the population, the Fianna might be considered as a strong contender to the title of "the first Fascist force in modern Europe", somewhat


7 Sean O'Faolain, Constance Markievicz, op. cit., p. 86.

anachronistically bestowed by the Reverend Professor Martin
on the Ulster Volunteers.\textsuperscript{9} Organizers for Na Fianna Eireann
travelled throughout Ireland canvassing separatist school
teachers looking for promising pupils;\textsuperscript{10} and Liam Mellows,
in a diary kept while he made the rounds of Ireland as a
Fianna organizer, noted that the Irish Christian Brothers
were particularly helpful in this respect.\textsuperscript{11}

The small I.R.B. movement, whose membership in 1911 has
been estimated as being approximately 1,500,\textsuperscript{12} kept up what
pressure it could against the Irish Parliamentary Party
through the pages of Irish Freedom. Irish Freedom was
launched with Irish-American support in 1910; but with the
onset of what seemed to be an inexorable progress towards
Home Rule, its impact in such an open form was blunted on
the feeling of confident euphoria which sustained the Irish
Party. Because Home Rule had been accepted as inevitable
by the British Government and was broadly satisfactory to
Irish nationalist opinion, no serious attempt was made at
this time to silence the extremists or to suppress organizations
like the Fianna. Republicanism was preached along with the
modified separatism of Sinn Fein without much overt effect

\textsuperscript{9} F. X. Martin, ed., The Easter Rising, 1916 and University
\textsuperscript{10} C. Desmond Greaves, Liam Mellows and the Irish Revolution,
op. cit., p. 43.
\textsuperscript{11} The diary was published in Irish Freedom, June, 1913.
\textsuperscript{12} Kevin B. Nowlan, "Tom Clarke, MacDermott, and the I.R.B."
in F. X. Martin, ed., Leaders and Men of the Easter Rising:
though the seeds were sown. These seeds were not expected to germinate and thus could without apparent danger be ignored both by the British Government and by the Irish Parliamentary Party.

The I.R.B. did lend some support to Arthur Griffith's methods if not to his ultimate goal of a dual monarchy over Great Britain and Ireland in an effort to use all means to "undermine the influence of Home Rule on Irish opinion."¹³ There was some common ground between Sinn Fein and the I.R.B. Both were ideologically committed to hatred of England, to non-cooperation at the very least with the administration, to an anti-recruitment propaganda effort, to a racialist exaltation of the Gael over the Gall and to the myth of Ireland's soul which they confidently asserted to be on their side whatever the people of Ireland might choose. This latter kind of conviction is naturally essential to a minority movement of an extremist nature professing to act in the name of an unsympathetic majority. Neither movement was primarily concerned in its public utterances to argue its case rationally in the hope of convincing its audience; both relied on endless repetition to make their views familiar to Irishmen.¹⁴ There was in fact little hope of success for extremists in the absence of serious setbacks on the road to Home Rule. Arthur Griffith and Sinn Fein

were willing to allow the Irish Parliamentary Party to bring to Ireland as much self government as they could through constitutional parliamentary agitation. Irish Freedom on the other hand showed open apprehension of Home Rule; and throughout 1911 its denunciations of all who co-operated with Britain, in particular of those who joined the British Army, for which it professed only contempt, grew and the fervour with which it preached hatred of England increased. By February 1911 the contents of the paper reflected I.R.B. fears that Home Rule might be accepted as a settlement of the Irish demand for self-government. The generally favourable reception accorded King George V on his 1911 visit was greeted with despair by Irish Freedom and it commented that:

There may be a few friendly and some passive and indifferent; but the majority of our countrymen - divided on politics and distracted by parties though they may be - hate England, despite her deluding friendship, and will gladly welcome any opportunity for her downfall and humiliation. This is true.15

This propaganda, however, failed to impress the vast majority of nationalist Irishmen who continued to trust the Irish Parliamentary Party's methods and to credit the British Government with a genuine determination to grant satisfaction to Irish aspirations.

On one question the I.R.B. attitude throughout 1911 as reflected in Irish Freedom was ambiguous. There was obvious uncertainty about the attitude which the I.R.B. ought to adopt towards the Ulster fulminations against Home Rule.

15 August, 1911.
At times Irish Freedom seemed to adopt the general nationalist position of treating Ulster's agitation with contempt as being no more than a comic bluff, while at other times it welcomed it as representing a defiance and rejection of British rule in Ireland. Neither position was based on an adequate understanding of the position of Ulster unionists, but the ambiguity was lessened when Ulstermen armed and drilling lent a more plausible colour to the notion that their rebellion meant the end of loyalty to Great Britain. The interpretation of Ulster resistance to Home Rule as being fundamentally disloyal to the United Kingdom and to the Empire was an ideologically motivated distortion, related to wish-fulfilment more than to accurate assessment; but it was useful to the I.R.B. in that it permitted them to convince themselves, at least temporarily, that they might find common ground with Ulster Protestants more easily than could the Irish Parliamentary Party.

The inaction of the British Government against the separatist propaganda would later lead the unionists with some justification to blame the supineness of the administration for the unimpeded growth of the forces which stood behind the Easter Rebellion and the anti-conscription movement, but in the light of the expectations of 1912 the British attitude was not unreasonable. It would have been far less explosive to allow Irishmen to cope with the problems of extremism than for the British Government to further add to its unpopularity and to its reputation, deserved or not, for using
unwarranted coercion in Ireland.

One initial problem, which was obvious even in 1912, was that the House of Lords still had the power to delay the measure for two years; this period of time when the provisions of the Bill were known was bound to be more advantageous to the opponents and critics of the measure than to its advocates. The Parliament Act of 1911 required that for a Bill to receive Royal Assent without the consent of the House of Lords, it had to be passed in an identical form three times by the House of Commons; this provision greatly restricted the freedom of the Government to cope with criticism and dissatisfaction. On the other hand, failure to meet constructive criticism could drive the critics into more serious and sustained opposition. It was clear from the outset that the Unionists would resolutely oppose Home Rule; it was equally clear that there were other groups in Ireland which would be highly dissatisfied by the measure's limited scope. The delay in the passage of the Bill merely provided these groups with an opportunity to organize their propaganda and to aggregate all the various strands of discontent and opposition.

One of the major shortcomings of the Home Rule Bill from the point of the Irish nationalist middle-class lay in its financial provisions. Here again the different economic structures of the two islands were all important. The British tax-structure was designed for a mature urban-industrial economy and it was to be applied to Ireland under the provisions of Home Rule. The small capitalist class of
Dublin wanted a tax structure which would encourage greater development of small underdeveloped industries, which was one of the reasons why William Martin Murphy and his newspaper, The Irish Independent, gave a lukewarm welcome to the Bill. Agrarian interests who wanted a taxation system geared to a rural-agrarian economy were also dissatisfied but to a lesser extent, and some Roman Catholic Bishops were also lukewarm towards the Bill on this account.

The Gaelic League, on the whole, welcomed the Home Rule Bill and Patrick Pearse, speaking to a League meeting in Carrick-on-Suir on 31 December 1911, expressed a qualified welcome for the then yet to be introduced measure. His major ground for welcoming the Bill was that it would give control over education to an Irish Parliament which would then, he asserted, proceed to Gaelicize Irish education; but he warned that should Home Rule fail to become law:

> We cannot afford to let this Irish nation die. What may happen if Home Rule does not come may be left to the young generation, and he could assure them that they will know what to do, and will do it. They may all be called upon sooner than they expect to take their place in this last great fight for the Irishising of the education of Ireland, and in the other momentous movements connected with their country's future. Every Irishman and woman must decide on which side they will be in the fight - on the side of England or Ireland.¹⁶

Gaelic Leaguers were prone to the type of identification made here between the Irish language and Ireland as opposed to the English language and England, a prominent feature of

¹⁶Cork Examiner, 1 January, 1912.
the lecture given at the same time as Pearse's by a Father O'Donnell to the Ardmore Gaelic League in which he regaled his audience with a recital of English atrocities in Ireland complete with innocent babes being tossed on bayonnet points. Here also, however, the speaker welcomed the "end of exploitation" which was to come with Home Rule. 17 There was, then, in the part of the Irish-Ireland movement, a disposition to accept Home Rule though it was not quite as enthusiastic as that bestowed upon the measure by the Irish Parliamentary Party. It must be borne in mind that in the early months of 1912 no one had yet seen the Bill itself, yet the Gladstone measures and the pronouncements of politicians had led to a realistic anticipation of its terms. The general mood of Irish public opinion, apart from the Irish Republican Brotherhood and the unionists, was thus favourable to acceptance of the anticipated measure. As Robert Kee pointed out:

History written from a later separatist premise has sometimes implied that the eventual Irish disillusionment with Home Rule arose from the inadequacy of the national demand Home Rule made. But from 1886 to the passing of a Home Rule Act in 1914 few, apart from the usual tiny minority of Fenians, ever suggested that Home Rule was an inadequate national demand. All the public emphasis was the other way: that it was totally adequate. The real truth was that even for such a limited national demand, there was not, when things turned difficult, the enthusiasm to make it a cause of overriding, compelling urgency. 18

Unionists in Ulster were given an opportunity to demonstrate the strength of their resolve early in 1912 when the

17 Ibid.

18 The Green Flag, op. cit., p. 405.
visit to Belfast of Winston Churchill was announced. The visit was designed to provide Ulster with a preview of the planned Home Rule legislation; and the Ulster Hall where Lord Randolf Churchill had denounced Gladstone's attempts to settle the Irish question was the chosen venue for his son's pro-Home Rule performance. By early 1912 the Ulster Unionists Council had determined to oppose Home Rule and they had begun to muster their forces. On 4 January, 1912 The Irish Independent carried reports that ex-army officers had begun to drill unionist opponents of Home Rule throughout Ulster. On the 6th the same newspaper reported Sir Edward Carson's challenge to the Government to prosecute him uttered at a large meeting in Omagh attended by 20,000 unionists. In the course of his speech Sir Edward rejected the idea of a separate Ulster parliament and later on he re-iterated his interpretation of the demand of Irish unionists:

It is very plain, very honest, and a very simple one. It is that we should be allowed to continue as citizens of the United Kingdom under the same King and same Parliament under which we were born. We ask no more, and we ask no less. We ask for no ascendancy, and we will allow none over us; we ask to live in brotherly love with all our countrymen, whatever their class or creed may be, but we will allow no class or creed to dominate us in the exercise of our civil and religious liberty. 19

On 17 January the Ulster Unionist Council decided that Winston Churchill must be prevented from speaking in the

19 The Irish Independent, 6 January, 1912.
Ulster Hall; and on the following day Major F. H. Crawford, speaking to the West Belfast Unionist Literary and Debating Society, called for the creation of a force of Ulster constables independent of Dublin control to be on hand during the Churchill visit on 8 February. On 24 January T. W. Russell, the Vice-President of the Irish Department of Agriculture, seemed to put forward the Government's reply at a meeting in Strabane where he assured the audience that Home Rule was safe despite Unionist bluster and where he further announced that the Government would move against those who incited to rebellion. On the following day, however, the Government bowed to the threats and the venue for the Home Rule meeting was changed to the Celtic Football Park in a nationalist part of Belfast. The decision may well have averted riots and bloodshed, but it left the unionists in possession of the field. The first flexing of Ulster muscle had been successful, the aim had been modest but this success was well calculated to encourage the belief that the Government could easily be intimidated by a show of force. The lesson was not lost on Ulster unionists, though it would be another year before the Ulstermen, who were already engaged in drilling, were brought together under central organization and control.

A different lesson went out to organized labour when P. T. Daly of the Irish Transport Workers' Union was sentenced to three months in gaol for speeches inciting to violence.
This led to a questioning by labour leaders of the immunity from prosecution which seemed to shroud the unionists who had incited to violence on the occasion of the Churchill visit. The period was a tense one as far as industrial relations were concerned, and the summer of 1911 had been marked by severe industrial unrest throughout the United Kingdom. In one of the strikes which affected Dublin the Irish administration had intervened to compel Irish shipmasters to accept the terms agreed to in Great Britain following a round of sympathy strikes and lock-outs involving the seamen and firemen's union. This intervention had secured a labour victory in Dublin, but it had not erased the memory of official protection given to "blacklegs" in past strikes both in Belfast and Dublin. In the carter's strike in 1908 in Dublin James Larkin had first expressed the hope that some day the armed forces of the Crown employed on strike-breaking duties would be faced by a "citizen army". The labour victory in the seamen and firemen's strike was closely followed in August, 1911 by a strike of railwaymen. As a result of the strike, and of supporting sympathy strikes, five hundred members of the Irish Transport Workers Union


22 Ibid., p. 53.
employed by timber merchants found themselves locked out at the time the strike was settled. Despite the intervention of the general secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, the employers were adamant and there followed a call for a general strike in Ireland; but union branches in Great Britain refused to support the Irish workers who had initially struck in sympathy with them and were being victimized as a result. This kind of discrimination benefitted the I.T.W.U. in Ireland but sowed seeds of discord within the United Kingdom labour movement. The Irish labour movement by 1912 thus shared the general anti-government, anti-police and anti-army attitude of the United Kingdom labour movement, but in addition there was bound to be resentment of the discriminatory attitude of British labour with attendant feelings of relative deprivation and frustration. The Irish Worker, with a circulation of 20,000 per week, began publication in June 1911 and contributed to the development of a climate of violence in Ireland; though in its earlier years, unlike Irish Freedom, its contribution was not specifically nationalistic. Labour's attitude towards England became more hostile early in 1912 when 'scab' labour was imported into Wexford during a labour dispute.

The religious dimension of the Irish question was emphasized by mass meetings of Protestants to denounce Home

24 The Irish Independent, 2 February, 1912.
Rule. At the end of January in Belfast eleven simultaneous meetings of Presbyterians were held, and 100 speakers denounced Home Rule to 15,000. \(^{25}\) This was followed by a joint meeting of Protestants of all denominations in the Y.M.C.A. Hall in Belfast to pray for the defeat of the measure, \(^{26}\) and in the following month by a meeting of 8,000 Methodists who expressed their willingness to fight if necessary for public morality and for their faith, both of which they were convinced were endangered by Home Rule. \(^{27}\) The third major Protestant denomination formally chose its side at the General Synod of the Church of Ireland in Dublin when a resolution of loyalty to the legislative union of Great Britain and Ireland was passed. \(^{28}\) The position of the Church of Ireland was clarified by Dr. D'Arcy, a Church of Ireland Bishop, on the occasion of Ulster Day when sermons on the theme of Home Rule equals Rome Rule were preached in most Protestant Churches. Dr. D'Arcy said on this occasion that:

... it is not sufficiently realized that behind Ulster's opposition to Home Rule there is an immensely strong conviction which is essentially religious. We contend for life, for civil liberty, for progress, for our rightful heritage of British citizenship. We contend also for faith and the freedom of our souls. And in this conflict we are fighting, not for ourselves only, but for the welfare of the whole country; for these are things

\(^{25}\) Ibid., 31 January, 1912.

\(^{26}\) Ibid., 6 February, 1912.

\(^{27}\) Cork Examiner, 15 March, 1912.

\(^{28}\) The Irish Independent, 17 April, 1912.
which alone can make Ireland free and happy.  

Meanwhile, Roman Catholic Bishops largely welcomed the prospect of Home Rule in their Lenten Pastorals. In addition to Home Rule and evil literature these Pastorals reflected the Bishops' concern with the labour unrest of the previous year and denounced socialism, Cardinal Logue and Bishop M'Hugh of Derry being particularly strong in their attacks. The other politically and socially disruptive force which was agitating Great Britain at this time was referred to only by Dr. O'Dwyer, the Bishop of Limerick, who denounced in strong terms the movement for female suffrage. The concern with evil literature provoked the interesting observation of Dr. Foley, the Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin, that, as some rationalistic and socialistic literature emerged from Dublin and Belfast, Home Rule might not provide sufficient protection for the people of Ireland; he suggested that the vast majority of Irishmen should never seek more than a primary education. Cardinal Logue's remedy for this evil, as disclosed to the South Louth Council of the Gaelic League in Drogheda, was more in keeping with the separatist spirit. He argued that "If they wanted to establish real nationality in Ireland, and bring back the

29 Ibid., 27 July, 1912
30 Ibid., 19 February, 1912.
31 Irish Weekly Independent, 24 February, 1912.
32 The Irish Independent, 26 February, 1912.
people to their primitive simplicity and devotion to Church and country, they could not adopt better means than to bring back their own tongue".  

This provides a partial explanation of clerical support for the Gaelic League as well as for increasing Protestant distrust of its aims. The goals later proposed by the Rev. R. Kane, S. J. to the 10th Annual Catholic Truth Society Conference held at the Mansion House Dublin may have conflicted with the Cardinal's aspirations but were unlikely to re-assure Protestants. Father Kane asserted that:

God has called the nation of the Celt in Ireland to follow a divine vocation in the reconquest of the world unto the truth and love of Christ. They held that that vocation had been for fifteen centuries, and would be up to the end of all centuries, if only the Celt remained faithful to it.

He then went on to congratulate Ireland on being the only truly Catholic nation in the world and on having splendidly rejected the material inducements to apostasy and acceptance of the conqueror's religion.  

On Home Rule the sectarian lines of the conflict became clearly drawn during 1912. Both sides enlisted God on their side and this sectarian character which the conflict assumed inevitably contributed to the bitterness and inflexibility of both sides. The various churches played a cohesive role within each faction and a divisive role among them. It is recognized that conflict between sects tends to be more totally committed and uncompromising than other forms of conflict.

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33 Irish Weekly Independent, 13 April, 1912.
34 Ibid., 19 October, 1912.
On 8 February, 1912 Winston Churchill spoke at the controversial Belfast Home Rule meeting held in a large tent on the grounds of the Celtic Park. Additional troops and police had been drafted into the city, and there was little violence though the car in which the First Lord of the Admiralty and Mrs. Churchill were travelling was almost overturned, and their departure from the city was unceremonious and hasty. The southern nationalist press treated the very fact that the meeting was held at all as a major triumph and carried headlines such as "Orange Bubble Burst", "Opposition Collapses", "Tory Leaders Disgraced", and "Carson's Pitiable Flight". This was not calculated to evoke restraint in future and overlooked the fact that Churchill's flight appeared to most observers to have been more pitiable than Carson's. On other grounds the meeting brought no satisfaction to those who had misgivings about the financial provisions of the Home Rule Bill; and while it provided them with no detailed information, it did make clear that the scope of the measure would be quite limited. The reaction of The Irish Times, the voice of southern unionism, in what could be seen as a bid to kill Home Rule, called for colonial self-government or nothing; and it forecast that the consequences of Home Rule would eventually be either "complete rupture or forcible reconquest". Opposition to the Home Rule Bill could then be expected from unionists who opposed the measure in

36 9 February, 1912.
principle and from groups like Sinn Fein and the All-for-Ireland League of William O'Brien who could be counted on to support the principle of Home Rule but who would attack the scope of the Bill, particularly in matters of finance.

William O'Brien, whose career in and out of the Irish Parliamentary Party had been erratic, was then involved in a campaign in favour of discussions between Unionists and Nationalists to try and find some common ground on which Home Rule might be more soundly based. The Irish Parliamentary Party, confident of outright victory, viewed these proposals with disfavour; and William O'Brien involved himself in a dispute with Dr. O'Donnell, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Raphoe, over a sentence in an appeal for funds on behalf of the United Irish League which had been issued over the Bishop's name. The controversial sentence referred to "a powerful and wealthy combination of factionists and avowed unionists" who were accused of "carrying out a violent campaign, and resorting to every conceivable device to wreck the national cause and dash the cup of liberty once more from the lips of Ireland". William O'Brien demanded a repudiation of the sentence or a retraction or failing this an investigation by an ecclesiastical court. 37 The Bishop acknowledged the letter but did not reply, thus further antagonizing O'Brien and his League.

Apart from the All-for-Ireland League, there were other

37 The Irish Independent, 23 February, 1912.
critics of the financial clauses of the Bill who welcomed it in principle. Erskine Childers argued in Dublin that the Irish Parliamentary Party should be demanding full fiscal autonomy before the Bill was introduced,^{38} and this stance was also taken by the General Council of Irish County Councils.^{39} What initially appeared to be a more serious blow to Irish Party prestige was the announcement on 7 March that the Home Rule Bill would not be introduced before the Easter Recess. Mr. Asquith's assurances, a few days later, that it would be introduced immediately after Easter served to soothe ruffled feathers, and the Party went ahead with its plans for a giant Home Rule rally. This was to be held on 31 March in Sackville Street, and four platforms were to be erected along the street with the major figures of the Party distributed among them. The advance announcements carried the names of the leaders who were to be at each of the platforms and the additional information that "the Committee are arranging to have the resolutions supported at each platform by a speech in Irish by a leading Gaelic speaker",^{40} though without revealing who these speakers were to be. The meeting attracted a considerable audience estimated at between 100,000 and 150,000 people and it was

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^{38} Ibid., 4 March, 1912.

^{39} Ibid., 9 April, 1912. This body had originally been an all-Ireland Council, but Unionist county councils had withdrawn when political positions in favour of Home Rule had been adopted by the General Council's Nationalist majority.

^{40} Cork Examiner, 29 March, 1912.
without doubt an impressive demonstration in favour of Home Rule and in support for the Irish Parliamentary Party. In the first press reports of the meeting Eoin MacNeill was identified as one of the advertised Gaelic speakers, but it was only later that Patrick Pearse was identified as having delivered the Irish speech at the platform presided over by Joe Devlin. 41 This confirms that Patrick Pearse was not at this time a well-known figure outside Irish-Ireland circles, and that it was specifically as an Irish-speaker and not as a prominent citizen that he was invited to speak.

Belfast was not to be outdone, however, and a few days later a four platform meeting which attracted a crowd estimated at 200,000 42 to the Balmoral Show Grounds was addressed by Unionist and Conservative leaders who pledged the audience under no circumstances to submit to Home Rule. The Lord Mayor of Belfast announced that there were now 150,000 Ulstermen who were trained and ready to resist the imposition of Home Rule. 43

The next demonstration of Irish Parliamentary Party solidarity occurred after the introduction of the Home Rule Bill in the House of Commons when a National Convention met

41 See for instance Cork Examiner, 2 April, 1912.

42 This is The Irish Independent estimate. F.S.L. Lyons gives a more conservative figure of 100,000 in his Ireland Since the Famine, op. cit., p. 300. In any case it was at least a meeting or comparable size to Dublin's.

43 The Irish Independent, 10 April, 1912.
in Dublin to consider the Bill. The Mansion House was filled with five thousand delegates from all over Ireland who listened to John Redmond making one of his home consumption speeches displaying more emotionalism than his Westminster utterances on the same topic. To his Dublin audience the Parliamentary Party leader declared that the first result of the Bill:

... was that Dublin Castle, with all its evil and blood stained tradition, disappears. The horrible system - anti-Irish, unrepresentative, centralized, bureaucratic - which had misgoverned, tortured and ruined Ireland, crumbled instantly into dust, and a new Irish Executive would control every Irish Board and every Irish Department.\(^\text{44}\)

The delegates then unanimously approved the Home Rule Bill with enthusiasm. The *Cork Examiner's* leading article on the Convention reflected the enthusiasm and the exaggeration with which the Home Rule Bill was received by the Party faithful; this kind of hyperbolism would contribute to the frustration which was to grow as the goal receded after 1914.

The leading article asserted that:

To-day will stand out as a turning point in Irish history - a day for which generations of Irishmen fondly hoped, and future generations will look back upon it as the commencement of an era of peace and reconcilement. The Irish renaissance will date from to-day, and England will have done something to wipe out the wrongs of the past by substituting trust and good feelings for suspicion and ill-will. Ireland can look forward with hope, and depend on the brains and brawn of her sons to make her prosperous and contented. The Home Rule Bill which is to occupy the attention of the National Conference to-day gives Ireland a fresh start and a new outlook - it will heal

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\(^{44}\) *Irish Weekly Independent*, 27 April, 1912.
old wounds and place this country and Great Britain on terms of equality. It will enable Ireland to develop her resources, to help her native industries, and pursue a progressive career on national lines. It will place responsibility on the country and test the quality of Irishmen as impartial legislators and equitable and reasonable men. It is a proud day for Mr. Redmond and his colleagues of the Irish Parliamentary Party - it is the culmination of years of patient labour and ceaseless watching, but it is also their justification and the apotheosis of the principle for which they fought. The Home Rule Bill will, it may be assumed, receive the ratification of the Irish nation through its delegates, and the Convention cordially imprint its approval on the work of the Irish Parliamentary Party. To-day's historic gathering must be regarded as the herald of the dawn of Irish liberty.45

Unionists attacks on Home Rule continued after the Bill's introduction, and the criticisms of its financial clauses by the All-for-Ireland League together with the Independent newspapers and the Cork Free Press, by Sinn Fein and by the labour movement became more specific. These critics, however, did not oppose the principle of Home Rule and concentrated their attacks on certain features of the 1912 measure. Arthur Griffith did promise that Sinn Fein would use whatever powers the Irish obtained to further the cause of national independence.46 Such assertions, even though they emanated from a tiny minority, did lend credence to the Bonar Law attacks on Home Rule as being the first step towards the dissolution of the Empire. At a later meeting reported in the press Arthur Griffith concentrated on the taxation provisions of the Bill whereby the British Treasury would continue to

45 22 April, 1912.
46 Irish Independent, 17 April, 1912.
collect Irish revenues. 47 The Countess Markievicz, also speaking on a Sinn Fein platform in Drumcondra,

... advised that the New Bill should be used to the best advantage of the country, and said she was sure Mr. Redmond would get the best he could. They, of the Sinn Feiners, should try to take the higher view of trying to improve the defects of the Bill. 48

The only true discordant note in the Sinn Fein approach to the Bill was struck significantly by one of the I.R.B. infiltrators, Eamonn Ceannt, who argued that Sinn Feiners were justified in going to any length in opposition to the Irish Parliamentary Party. 49 Patrick Pearse, on the other hand, continued to support the Bill on the grounds that it would give Ireland control over education; and in December, 1912 he addressed a Mansion House meeting on Education and Home Rule chaired by Professor T. M. Kettle. 50

Labour's major criticisms of the Bill were put forward by both Jim Larkin and James Connolly, but they themselves at this time were confronted by hostility from all quarters. The unionists regarded them as supporters of Home Rule, the Irish Parliamentary Party saw the labour movement as a divisive force in Irish society, and the Roman Catholic Church opposed them as proponents of socialism. When Larkin went to Sligo, early in 1912, to set up a branch of the I.T.W.U., the Roman Catholic Bishop of Elphin, Dr. Clancy, warned his

47 Ibid., 20 July, 1912.
48 Ibid., 7 May, 1912.
49 Ibid., 2 May, 1912.
50 Ibid., 12 December, 1912.
spiritual charges against socialism and concluded, "I therefore expect and hope that no respectable citizen of our town or country, and no faithful member of the Church will take part in the meeting at which this man is advertised to speak". Cardinal Logue at the annual meeting of the Maynooth Union condemned all strikes without qualification. This hostility was a serious handicap to the Irish labour movement and increased working-class frustration by retarding its development in contrast with British labour organization.

James Connolly was the first labour leader to put forward the movement's criticisms of the Home Rule Bill at a Belfast Home Rule meeting. He did give a qualified welcome to Home Rule because it opened the way to social reform, but he maintained that the present measure needed to be amended to allow for the payment of members of the Irish Parliament and of their election expenses, for the enfranchisement of women, proportional representation, and the dropping of the Senate. Jim Larkin, a few days later, repeated most of these criticisms at the Clonmel meeting of the Irish Trade Union Congress which decided by 49 to 18 to set up an independent labour party. He made the additional criticism that the seat distribution in the new Irish Parliament meant the under representation of urban workers and the overrepresentation of farmers. "Irish

51 Ibid., 25 March, 1912.
52 Ibid., 28 June, 1912.
53 Ibid., 18 May, 1912.
farmers had", he said, "neither a soul to save nor a body to kick, and God help the workers if they were handed over to them under an Irish Parliament." He later reiterated that farmers were "soulless" and "money-grabbing". Such accusations against farmers inevitably strained relations between labour and the Irish Parliamentary Party, and friction was increased by the withdrawal of the British Labour Party from the House of Commons in early July because of a dispute with the Liberals over candidacies at by-elections. In August the Lord Mayor of Dublin, speaking at an Enniscorthy Home Rule meeting made a strong attack on the effort to set up an Irish Labour Party and accused whoever had suggested this step of being "a traitor to Ireland", an accusation which would be indiscriminately used by all sections of the nationalist camp each against the other in the years to come.

The criticisms of William O'Brien and of the All-for-Ireland League were more moderate and largely confined to the financial clauses of the Bill though they also attacked the Irish Parliamentary Party's contemptuous attitude towards the unionists.

It was from the unionists that the most serious challenge to the Irish Parliamentary Party and to Home Rule came. From that source came not criticism but implacable hostility and opposition, and the form that this took was in many cases

54 Ibid., 29 May, 1912.
55 Ibid., 12 August, 1912.
quite ugly. The drilling and training going on all over the north-east significantly contributed to the potential for violence in Ireland, and oratorical violence became a regular feature of Unionist demonstrations. One of the major sources of strength for Ulster unionism in particular stemmed from the whole-hearted support which it received from the British Conservative Party and from its leader, Mr. Bonar Law. The Conservatives supported Sir Edward Carson for a number of reasons. He was one of the leaders of the Party and one of the most brilliant luminaries of the English bar, he had served in the Conservative Government before 1906 and he was a man of proven ability and unquestioned integrity. Andrew Bonar Law, the Conservative leader, had family ties with Ulster which tended to make him sympathetic to the Ulster Protestant reaction to Home Rule. Professor R. B. McDowell has pointed out additional factors which influenced the Party's attitude:

Surprisingly enough a party which had always prided itself on its devotion to law and order unhesitatingly and unanimously expressed its complete sympathy with the Ulster unionists. This can be explained partly by the resentment generated by the constitutional crisis of 1910 - 11 which left the conservatives with the genuine if absurd and exaggerated belief that the Liberals had cheated by changing the rules of the game, and partly by the character of the Ulster agitation, formal, military, disciplined and emphatically loyal to the symbols conservatives revered. Finally there was the feeling that a community, small but energetic and fervently attached in numerous ways to Great Britain, was being thrust from the political system in which it wished to remain and placed in a
position of subordination to its political antagonists. 56

There were at least two other feelings operating on the Conservative Party. First the feeling that Home Rule had not been submitted to the electorate, this feeling was largely fanciful because Conservative candidates themselves had left the electorate in no doubt as to the issue despite the hedging of Liberals. Second, the feeling more soundly based, that the Liberals were motivated more by the need for Irish Parliamentary Party support in the House of Commons than by conviction in favour of Home Rule. 57 Sir Edward Carson speaking to the Oxford Union admitted the failure of the Union so far, but he blamed it largely on Irish politicians and on the self-denying ordinance which prevented them from accepting office and fully participating in Imperial government as did Scottish politicians of all parties. 58 Thus, for Unionists the Southern Nationalists' demand for Home Rule tended to be reduced to childish petulance and a call for the redress of self-induced disabilities, a redress which involved the ruin and degradation of Ulster and of Protestant unionists throughout Ireland.

The fear of economic and social deprivation attendant upon Home Rule, the religious fervour of the resistance to it, the drilling and warlike preparations whipped up by the

57 F.S.L. Lyons, Ireland Since the Famine, op. cit., p. 300.
58 The Irish Independent, 7 June, 1912.
rhetoric of propaganda, the identification of Roman Catholics as visible enemies all contributed to the creation of an explosive climate in the north of Ireland; and violence began to be increasingly frequent in July, 1912. The event which sparked off the worst of the violence was an attack upon a Sunday school excursion by a party from the Ancient Order of Hibernians. The A.O.H. was an exclusively Roman Catholic body, dedicated at this time to Home Rule and dominated by Mr. Joseph Devlin, one of the four most influential leaders of the Irish Parliamentary Party. William O'Brien described it as "Catholic Orangism in green paint". The incident began an eruption of anti-Roman Catholic violence in Belfast, and between 3 and 6 July hundreds of Roman Catholic workers were driven from their jobs. The timing was ominous as the 12th was approaching and more violence could be expected. Extra police were drafted into Belfast but the violence was rhetorical - drilling displays were held and many threats of armed resistance to Home Rule were voiced but tempers were held in check. The Roman Catholic community was alarmed and a meeting in Belfast under the chairmanship of Dr. Tohill, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Down and Conor, called for additional troops and police to protect Roman Catholics. The urgency of this appeal was increased by attacks on priests and nuns in Lisburn.

59 The Irish Revolution..., op. cit., p. 31
60 Cork Examiner, 13 July, 1912.
Some additional protection was provided, but despite this and a strong condemnation of such violence by Sir Edward Carson, the attacks, particularly on Belfast Roman Catholic workers, continued throughout the year.

The Ulster unionist resistance to Home Rule received its greatest measure of support yet from the Conservative Party at the meeting at Blenheim in July where the Leader of His Majesty's Loyal Opposition threw the firm support of his Party behind the Ulster resistance whatever form it took, specifically including force. This removed any feeling of isolation which Ulster unionists may have felt and inevitably reduced any normative inhibitions on the use of violence. On the other hand the outbreaks of violence were contained despite the growing alienation of Ulster unionists, partly because of this support of the Conservative Party which channelled this alienation into a parliamentary course of oratorical violence, and partly because the Ulster Leaders were able to keep up an agitation which, while violent in many of its aspects, stopped short of physical force revolution. The climax of this strategy in 1912 was reached in September with the signing of the Ulster Covenant. Lengthy preparations were made during the summer and emotions were roused to a high pitch for the occasion. Protestant clergymen joined in giving the event a sacred character and in making it a success. The success of the Covenant was based

61Irish Weekly Independent, 10 August, 1912.
on a perception of the need for aggregative action in order to defeat Home Rule and a feeling that the Government, despite its commitment to Home Rule, would be unwilling to forcibly coerce a united body of citizens enjoying the full support of close to half the members of the House of Commons and the great majority of the House of Lords. The potential for violence in Protestant Ulster at this time was quite high. The anticipation of massive deprivation if Home Rule came about was sufficient to create this potential, but the perception of suitable objects of hostility was diffused among the Roman Catholic Church, the Liberal Government and the Irish nationalists. Conflict with Belfast Roman Catholic workers was non-realistic but served to reduce individual tensions and to increase solidarity feelings among Protestant workers.\(^{62}\) The real threat to the Ulster position came from the Liberal Government which had the power both legal and physical to impose Home Rule, and here the support of the Conservative Party and loyalty to the Empire and its symbols operated as restraints upon violent manifestations of hostility. The strategy of the Ulster leaders called in any case for the defeat of Home Rule preferably through a demonstration or Unionist determination short of actual physical conflict. The Covenant itself involved no firm commitment to the use of force though it certainly did not exclude it in its pledge to use "all means which may be found necessary to

\(^{62}\) On these effects see Louis A. Coser, The Functions of Social Conflict, op. cit., pp. 33 ff.
defeat the present conspiracy to set up a Home Rule Parliament in Ireland". The Covenant was not taken seriously by the British Government or by the Irish Parliamentary Party and the southern Nationalist press used flippant expressions such as 'chocolate soldier' to describe Sir Edward Carson. The level of contempt for the feeling represented by the Covenant was perhaps best illustrated by an advertisement which ran for several weeks in *The Irish Independent*. The advertisement consisted of a parody of the Ulster Covenant and purported to be a pledge of the men and women of Ireland "not to accept, support, encourage, or in any way countenance any Oatmeal other than White's Wafer Oatmeal". 63 The Irish Parliamentary Party, anxious to secure a period of relative tranquility so that the Home Rule Bill could be passed safely with a minimum of disturbance, treated the Ulster movement as bluff. Ominously, however, Ulster unionists were drilling, and in August a meeting was announced which was to be presided over by the Lord Mayor of Belfast on the 10 September "for the formation of a battalion of Citizen Volunteers", 64 and the following day the name of the body was announced as "the Young Citizen Volunteers of Ireland". 65 This made the Covenant a potentially far more dangerous event than the Irish Party credited.

63 This advertisement first appeared in *The Irish Independent* on 27 September, 1912, the day before the signing of the Ulster Covenant.

64 *The Irish Independent*, 27 August, 1912.

65 Ibid., 28 August, 1912.
The Liberal Government was also at this time predisposed to think of unionist agitation as being a bluff, but they could see at least two dangers in it. One was the hortative influence it could have on other groups and the other, which was of more immediate political moment, was its influence on British public opinion. By-elections in 1912 indicated a loss of popularity for the Government. The Insurance Act was the major cause of growing unpopularity, but Unionist propaganda was influencing many in Great Britain and making them reluctant to force Home Rule upon "loyal" Ulster Protestants. The greatest shock of this nature was the loss of Mid-Lothian, Gladstone's old seat which the Liberals had held for thirty-two years, in September. The Liberal Government had also been shocked by Unionist tactics. The Parliamentary crisis of 1910-11 had seriously weakened the consensus of basic values among the major parliamentary parties characteristic of British politics under normal conditions, and the willingness of the Conservatives to adopt the Ulster agitation as their own was symptomatic of this breakdown of consensus.

Before the signing of the Ulster Covenant, Winston Churchill, speaking in Dundee, had reaffirmed the Government's determination to proceed with the two controversial measures on the Liberal agenda, the Insurance Bill and Home Rule, but the strongest reaction to Ulster tactics came from the Prime Minster after the Covenant had aroused some uneasiness.

66Cork Examiner, 12 September, 1912.
in Nationalist circles despite the contempt and hilarity with which it had been greeted. Mr. Asquith, addressing the East-Fife Liberal Constituency Association, vigourously attacked the unionists in the following terms:

I need not tell you that the Government and Parliament of the United Kingdom are not going to bow to such a threat.

One warning note I want to sound is this. Don't let them imagine that they can confine this new doctrine to the case which happens to be politically convenient to them at the moment. The reckless and rhodomontade talk at Blenheim in the early summer, as developed and amplified in this Ulster 'Campaign' furnishes forth for the future a complete grammar of anarchy. Opposition and repugnance to obey inconvenient or objectionable laws are not the monopoly of the Protestants in the North-East of Ireland.

Their new dogma, countersigned, as it is now, by the leading men of the Tory Party, will be rightly invoked and cited whenever a spirit of lawlessness, fed and fostered by a sense of real or imaginary injustice takes body and shape and claims to stop the ordered machinery of self-governed society.

Don't let them forget this. If they were to succeed - they won't succeed - if they were to succeed in preventing the passing of the Home Rule Bill, what possible answer would they have to make to the four-fifths of the Irish people whose long-cherished aspirations would have been frustrated and defeated - what answer would they have to make to those men if they said, in turn, "we will take the law into our hands, you have refused us our elementary rights, and it is no longer open to you to say that we must respect what Parliament has done."

There were, however, disturbing signs of possible fissures in the Liberal Party's determination over the Home Rule issue. The major parliamentary manifestation of this was the amendment, moved at the outset of the committee stage of the Home Rule Bill, to exclude from the operation of the

67 Irish Weekly Independent, 12 October, 1912.
measure the predominantly Protestant counties of Armagh, Antrim, Down and Londonderry. The Ulster Unionist members of Parliament supported the amendment primarily on the basis that it would wreck the Bill itself; but the disturbing feature of the proposal was that it was moved by Mr. Agar-Robartes, a Liberal, and actively supported by four other Liberals while several more Liberals stayed away from the House unpaired.\textsuperscript{68} As Robert Kee commented about exclusion:

\ldots such a solution was, at that time, in terms of logic and reason, probably the best and most equitable that could have been devised. But logic and reason were not the prime movers on either side of the Irish situation. It was not only Ulster Protestants but Catholic Nationalists whose fundamental attitude was emotive: Home Rule itself was for the Irish nationalist a strange compromise between reason and emotion.\textsuperscript{69}

The Liberal Government was not emotionally involved in Home Rule to the same extent as were Irish politicians, but on the whole they stood by their measure and the amendment was defeated by sixty-nine votes; but the party affiliation of the mover and the defections of some Liberals over the issue alarmed Nationalists. John Dillon's reaction was to nail the Irish Parliamentary Party colours ever more firmly to the indivisible Ireland mast. In a speech in Carlisle he described the Party's attitude:

\begin{quote}
We want Home Rule for all Ireland or no Home Rule, and we would rather wait for years and continue to fight rather than consent to have our country divided up in this disgraceful way, and so perpetuate
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{68}\textit{Annual Register}, 1912 (London, Longmans, Green and Co., 1913), p. 142.

\textsuperscript{69}\textit{The Green Flag}, op. cit., p. 474.
these disgraceful quarrels which are the result of the Union, and which would disappear in 5 years under a proper Home Rule Bill.\textsuperscript{70}

These were words which prophesied the future of the Home Rule movement and of the Irish Parliamentary Party; though in the end Irish public opinion, which would not allow the Party to bargain on this basis, would turn to the Sinn Fein Party which fought for and eventually obtained a greater measure of autonomy but only over a smaller geographical area.

In 1912, however, Unionists and Nationalist leaders both felt that the exclusion of part of Ulster would mean the wrecking of Home Rule. The rank and file of the Ulster unionist movement, on the other hand, had always had a more narrowly provincial outlook than Sir Edward Carson in particular. They looked upon their part of Ulster as a natural base on which was built their peculiar way of life, and emotionally they were not committed to an all Ireland outlook. The exclusion of Ulster from Home Rule meant the abandonment of a substantial body of Protestant unionists to 'Rome Rule'; but these belonged on the whole to the Church of Ireland, a different Church from that of the majority of northern Protestants and more significantly they were of a different social and economic class. These differences, in the months to come, would permit Ulster unionists to increasingly detach themselves from their southern brethren and eventually accept the exclusion of the six most Protestant counties of Ireland.

\textsuperscript{70}Irish Weekly Independent, 22 June, 1912.
from the provisions of the Home Rule Bill as the best bargain they could make, despite the inflexibility of Sir Edward Carson's initial position that no compromise was possible on a measure which could only bring disaster upon Ireland. 71 John Redmond's attitude, while quite the reverse in ultimate purpose, was just as uncompromising, but the quality of the public opinion upon which his position rested was, at this time, quite inflexible also. Nationalist support was remarkable for its unity and its size in the south and west of Ireland and was considerable in most of Ulster. The nature of this support and the limited nature of the Home Rule Bill led Winston Churchill to say that "...it is perfectly true to say that never before has so little been asked; and never before have so many people asked for it." 72 But the concentration and determination of the Ulster unionists would eventually make exclusion acceptable as a logical compromise to the British Government unaffected by the myth of "Ireland: one and indivisible".

There were other factors which operated so as to increase tension in Anglo-Irish relations at this time. These included the British reaction to the 1912 outbreak of foot and mouth disease in Ireland, the appointment of Mr. Norway and the results of the Civil Service examinations. The outbreak of foot and mouth disease among Irish cattle was

72 Ibid., Vol. XXXVII, 16 April, 1705.
discovered in Swords, Co. Dublin in June, 1912, and the English Board of Agriculture immediately prohibited the importation of cattle from all parts of Ireland into Great Britain. This was perceived in Ireland as unwarranted discrimination because in Great Britain, where the disease was at this time more widespread, cattle from unaffected areas could be moved freely. Thus the spirit of the Act of Union was demonstrably failing once more. A further difficulty, according to D. Hoctor was:

... that even when the English Board of Agriculture had agreed to the removal of import restrictions, some local authorities in England refused to allow Irish cattle into their districts. The unwarranted suspicions of Irish cattle in Britain naturally led to a reaction in Ireland. Irish farmers and cattle-traders began to think that there were insidious influences at work to destroy the Irish cattle trade. Suggestions were even made that the disease had been brought in maliciously and that it was being used in the campaign then being waged for the admission of Canadian store cattle into Britain.  

Tim Healy, at this time linked with William O'Brien and the All-for-Ireland League, asserted that the loss to Irish farmers resulting from the exclusion of Irish cattle from Britain in 1912 ran into a million pounds, and by December The Irish Independent was describing the cattle trade restrictions as an "unbearable ordeal". A severe economic blow was thus sustained by Ireland, and simultaneously the

73 The Department's Story, op. cit., p. 76.
75 18 December, 1912.
subordinate position of Ireland was reaffirmed despite the vigorous protests of Irish interests including those of T. W. Russell who, as Vice-President of the Irish Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, was a member of the Government.

The Norway appointment was a comparatively minor incident. The Secretary to the Post Office in Ireland was an important civil servant controlling the largest government department in Ireland. The incumbent in 1912 was a Roman Catholic but it was learned in the summer that he was to be succeeded by Mr. Norway, a Protestant. Tim Healy observed in one of his letters that the appointment was creating considerable dismay in Nationalist circles and he reported that...

All the bishops, including Dr. O'Donnell, wrote in vain to Redmond and Dillon. Herbert Samuel saw Redmond several times. The action of the Government shows that they have no belief that Home Rule will become law.76

Mr. Norway's appointment proved to be a successful one and not many Irishmen are likely to have drawn from his appointment the conclusion that the Government had given up on Home Rule, but on what appeared to be the eve of the passage of the measure it could only be a sobering disillusionment for Party Leaders and bishops to find that their influence on a crucial question of patronage was so limited.

The question of civil service appointments arose when

76 T. M. Healy, Letters and Leaders..., op. cit., p. 508.
the results of the 1912 examinations for entry into the civil service were published. It was noted that comparatively few Irishmen had been successful and that the portion of successful Irish applicants had been decreasing. This naturally affected directly only a very small minority of Irishmen who had received a secondary level education, but it was significant in that it revealed the slowing down of one of the major avenues for upward social mobility available to Irishmen with a suitable education. When it is borne in mind that more than half of the young men with a secondary education had attended Irish Christian Brothers' schools, failure in these examinations was likely to re-inforce any anti-English bias already acquired in addition to transforming these young men into members of the marginal, ill-employed, intelligentsia of urban Ireland.

1912 was a year of triumph for the Home Rule movement, but this triumph must not be allowed to obscure the fact that for some Irishmen it was also a time of retrogression. Home Rule itself meant a severe set back for Unionists and it created a situation highly conducive to violence in the north-east corner of Ireland. The British reaction to the outbreak of foot and mouth disease in Ireland was a severe economic disaster for Irish farmers, and the blocking of the Civil Service avenue for upwardly mobile young Irishmen was another alienating feature of this period. This last

77 Irish Weekly Independent, 1 June, 1912.
deprivation was aggravated by the drying up of opportunities for emigrants in the United States, Argentina, Canada, South Africa, etc. which began to be reported in the Irish press in late July. The publication of the Home Rule Bill itself was disquieting to the emerging southern bourgeoisie because of its unsatisfactory financial provisions which left them in an ambivalent position towards the Bill. The Roman Catholic hierarchy was in a similar position because though on the whole the Bishops eagerly welcomed Home Rule, they were apprehensive of the educational plans of John Dillon in particular. At the same time the Irish labour movement was made acutely conscious of its inferior status within the United Kingdom movement, and it could not see Home Rule as an answer to its problems in view of the rural orientation of most southern politicians and of the strong hostility of the Roman Catholic hierarchy. In 1912 only the anticipated relative deprivation of Ulster unionists represented a serious threat to the Irish Parliamentary Party, but there were other groups who were subjected to alienating experiences and to experiences likely to increase the intensity of their perceived relative deprivation.
From the point of view of Ireland's progression towards revolution, the year 1913 is dominated by two crucial developments: The labour unrest in Dublin and the growth of para-military organizations in both North and South. Significantly both of these involved violence or the threat of violence. However, both developments belong to the later part of the year and while their importance is overwhelming, they should not obscure the other events which contributed to increasing frustration and alienation.

The year began in the same climate of political optimism in the South as had prevailed in 1912. The road to Home Rule still appeared open and straight, and the Irish Parliamentary Party treated Ulster's unionist protest movement with the same mixture of amusement and contempt as before. In fact in early January there seemed to be some disarray in the Irish unionist camp. Sir Edward Carson, who had opposed partition proposals, now moved to support such an arrangement. This shift was seen to be purely tactical, directed at the defeat of Home Rule rather than at compromise through partition. At the same time Ronald McNeill supported an amendment to the Home Rule Bill which provided for the suspension of Home Rule in wartime. His support was based on the alleged perfidy and disloyalty of the Irish majority which might undermine a

\[1^\text{F.S.L. Lyons, John Dillon, op. cit., p. 329.}\]
British war effort. In reply to such evidence of distrust, the leadership of the Irish Parliamentary Party was led into making ever more solemn pronouncements of its loyalty to the Empire. John Dillon, addressing a meeting in University College, Dublin, gave an unambiguous statement of the Party's policy:

We at all events, who are engaged in conducting this Bill, have already pledged ourselves, and must pledge ourselves frequently in the future, if we take this Bill and accept it as a settlement, as we are prepared to do, and now have the mandate of the Convention to do - if we take this Bill and accept it as a settlement we must accept it honestly and from our hearts. We must not accept it as a leverage to get more. That would be dishonourable, and it would be betraying the British Ministers who are pledging their future credit before their own countrymen to settle this great international quarrel, which has lasted now for so many generations. We have stated, as Parnell stated, that we will take this Bill in good faith as a settlement of that quarrel, and get all the good for our own people that can be extracted from it, but we will not consent to use it as a leverage to wring out of England further concessions in the direction of the separation of the two countries.

Statements like this not only failed to mollify the unionist opponents of the Bill but also drove deeper the ideological wedge which separated the Irish Parliamentary Party and Sinn Fein.

The nationalist press in early 1913 continued to ridicule and to deny any relevance to the Ulster unionist position. Leading articles reiterated the inevitability of Home Rule and asserted that Ulster unionists would in the end prefer

2Freeman's Journal, 1 January, 1913.
3Freeman's Journal, 3 January, 1913.
Home Rule to partition. This attitude may owe something to the influence of southern Protestant unionists. Living in an area which would, under a partition settlement, obtain Home Rule, they tended to regard any scheme which retained the Protestants of Ulster as preferable to one which cut them off from that community. This was clearly Sir Edward Carson's position in early 1913.

The main focus for the attention of the Nationalist press in early 1913 was the by-election in Derry. The contest in a marginal Ulster constituency was seen as extremely important. Mr. Hogg, the Home Rule candidate, was described in almost all references to the election as a "Protestant Home Ruler" and Colonel Pakenham, the Unionist candidate, campaigned on the principles of "no Home Rule" and of "one man, one vote". The attraction of this latter principle was that its application to Derry would have required a redrawning of electoral boundaries making a Home Rule victory impossible. At the end of a strongly contested campaign in which both Parties carried in the sick to the polls, David Hogg won the seat by 57 votes.

This and the third reading of the Home Rule Bill in the House of Commons in mid-January gave the Irish Parliamentary Party good omens for the future. The passage of the Home Rule Bill was greeted with jubilation by John Redmond's supporters all

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4 See for example Irish Weekly Independent, 4 January, 1913 and Freeman's Journal, 29 January, 1913.
5 Freeman's Journal, 15 January, 1913.
6 Ibid., 31 January, 1913.
over Ireland and a great profusion of congratulatory resolutions were passed by all types of bodies and organizations in Ireland. The resolution passed by the Ancient Order of Hibernians in Ballycastle was fairly typical of the rhetorical flourishes in which most of these were couched. The resolution congratulated:

Mr. Redmond and the Party and the heroic Liberals led by the great and true Asquith, and the gallant Labour members, and extending them their sincere thanks and warm congratulations on the success of the Home Rule Bill, which, in their judgement, will make a happy and contented nation from Ballycastle, in the North to Cork, in the South.7

On the same day it was reported that the quarter meeting of the National Council of Sinn Fein had passed a resolution denying that the Home Rule Bill could be accepted as a final settlement of the claims of Ireland. At this meeting there was also an indication of the frustration affecting the extremists in the passage of a resolution moved by Eamonn Ceannt, one of the I.R.B. plants in Sinn Fein, "that this Council of Sinn Fein is of opinion that it is the duty of all Irishmen to possess a knowledge of arms".8 A few weeks later this was followed up by the Council when Ceannt was authorized to rent a shooting gallery in Harold's Cross for Sunday morning practice.9

When the House of Lords defeated the Home Rule Bill, there was a predictable Mansion House meeting of protest where the

7 Ibid., 22 January, 1913.
8 Ibid.
9 Marcus Bourke, The O'Rahilly, op. cit., p. 69.
Lords were denounced as tyrannical. The strongest condemnation was reserved for Lord Kenmare who, despite being an Irish Roman Catholic, had strongly opposed the Bill on the grounds that it was bound to lead to further demands for ever increasing powers of self-government. After many years of sabre rattling and extravagant rhetoric the Irish Parliamentary Party was finding it impossible to convince the opponents of separation of its commitments to limited self-government, while on the other hand its new found moderation was being denounced as a hollow mockery of the principles which it had been pretending to uphold throughout the past decades. This double "credibility gap" would prove a severe handicap for the Irish Parliamentary Party until its virtual disappearance in 1918, and the unionists as well as the separatists would make good use of it. In 1913 only the unionist attack presented a danger to the Party and Unionists like Mr. Locker-Lampson M.P. would come to Dublin and assure southern unionists that there could be no middle way, that Home Rule meant total separation. Sir Edward Carson's endorsement of partition meant that the Irish Parliamentary Party now fought on three fronts: First against unionist attacks on the principle of Home Rule itself, secondly against the Irish extremists' denunciation of moderation and compromise and thirdly against the proposal to partition the island. This third front became increasingly important; and

10 Irish Weekly Independent and Cork Examiner, 8 February, 1913.
11 Freeman's Journal, 15 March, 1913.
when partition came to be perceived in Britain as the only reasonable solution to the Irish question while in Ireland it remained totally unreasonable, Home Rule was lost.

Initial reaction to Sir Edward Carson's conversion to partition was to discuss the solution as not only inconceivable but as lacking support even among Ulster Protestants. The Hon. T. W. Russell reassured a Dublin audience in early March that the Government would never compromise with the unionists on the basis of the partition of Ireland or of Ulster. He further asserted that Ulster farmers were not about to imperil their land in order to please Captain Craig.  

Mr. Jeremiah MacVeagh, speaking in South Down later in March, insisted that "Ulster wanted Home Rule, and would scornfully reject any proposed separate treatment. They were not going to have their country partitioned as if she were another Poland".  

There was conflicting evidence which suggests greater willingness to accept partition in Ulster. In fact tempers were running high, and at the end of March Belfast juries were refusing to convict Protestants accused of intimidating Roman Catholic workers; and within a few days members of the Ancient Order of Hibernians attacked a Sunday school parade in Castledawson. Protestant Ulster was outraged and the

12 Irish Weekly Independent, 8 March, 1913.
13 Ibid., 29 March, 1913.
14 Freeman's Journal, 31 March, 1913.
15 Ibid., 2 April, 1913.
intimidation of Roman Catholic workers in Belfast became far more widespread with juries continuing to refuse to convict those charged with intimidation. This drew an unavailing protest from Lord Justice Cherry. Unionist apprehensions concerning a Roman Catholic Dublin Parliament increased. A Nationalist renegade, Mr. Garvin, commented on the partition proposal that "to feel that Ulster is safe is a great deal but it is hardly less important to preserve the rest of Ireland from the squalid anarchy that must descend upon it as the outcome of what Mr. Asquith and Mr. Redmond have hatched between them." In May Mr. Bonar Law came to Dublin to woo the southern unionists and to win their adhesion to at least a tactical use of the partition proposal. The Conservative leader at this time wished to be free to use proposals for the exclusion of at least part of Ulster in order to wreck Home Rule, but his position would obviously be stronger if he could count on the support of the influential southern unionists. They represented an obstacle to Conservative party support for the proposal to exclude Ulster from the provisions of Home Rule. As pointed out recently by a student of Irish unionism:

"British unionists objected to Home Rule on a number of grounds, imperial, constitutional, anti-socialist and out of concern for the Protestants of Ulster; but it can be urged that southern unionist pressure on, acceptability to, and contacts in the party activated

16 Ibid., 22 May, 1913.
17 Ibid., 16 May, 1913.
18 Irish Times, 19 May, 1913.
and kept alive prejudices against Home Rule despite changing conditions. By the twentieth century many Englishmen were coming round to the view that the only way to settle the Irish question was to partition Ireland, to allow Ulster unionists to opt out of a Dublin parliament; but the southern unionists hindered such a compromise solution over the third Home Rule Bill."19

If Bonar Law could persuade the southern Unionists to support partition, he would lead a united party confronting a Liberal government which had shown signs of wavering on the issue. His most persuasive argument was that partition would wreck the Home Rule scheme. Southern unionists were understandably lacking in enthusiasm for a scheme which would leave them as a smaller minority than even the full implementation of Home Rule envisaged, and the best solution from their point of view was the preservation of the status quo. In 1913 Bonar Law and Sir Edward Carson argued that this involved the necessity of supporting partition. The other option open to southern unionists was to try to compromise with John Redmond in an attempt to secure limits and concession on the scope of Home Rule. This qualified acceptance of Home Rule was very much a minority position among unionists, though it gave some comfort to the Nationalists. When in August two Church of Ireland Bishops, Dr. Plunkett of Tuam and Dr. Berry of Killaloe and Kilfenora declared themselves reconciled to Home Rule, the Cork Examiner hailed it as the end of unionist opposition to Home Rule.20 The conclusion was at least premature, and in October a widely publicized meeting of anti-

20 4 August, 1913.
Carson Protestants which was addressed by Sir Roger Casement gathered only 600 people even according to the Freeman's Journal estimate.\textsuperscript{21} The attitude of most southern unionists was reflected by Nora Robertson who wrote that:

... to the average Unionist of that time it seemed that traitors in the original motherland were handing over his person and fortunes to an inefficient, dishonest majority who detested him and his loyalties. He could hardly be blamed for taking this view since the Nationalist press in Dublin, and still more in the Provinces, excelled in vituperative outpourings against his order; local administration was riddled with favouritism and venalities; priests too appeared to have immense political power and worst of all, terrorism lurked in the active ranks of the Irish Republican Brotherhood. The argument that it might be judicious to treat with a moderate man such as Redmond, seemed to most Unionists, but by no means all, like approaching Beelzebub with an egg-spoon. The few who realized, what now appears obvious, that it was sensible to temporize with the inevitable were assured that it was not inevitable if only we kept a "united front" alongside Ulster.\textsuperscript{22}

Because of the prevalence of such an attitude among southern Unionists there was a generally favourable response to Mr. Bonar Law's appeal despite the Freeman's Journal rather contemptuous dismissal of his activities:

In point of fact, what the opposition leader wants is to be allowed to play his own game. In doing so he will run counter to Irish Unionist opinion, but if it can contain itself for a brief period all will be well. It is, of course, a childish policy - it is bluff once again; but Mr. Bonar Law is a young man and a very young leader. The result will be watched with interest, not all mixed with amusement.\textsuperscript{23}

\textsuperscript{21} 25 October, 1913.
\textsuperscript{22} Crowned Harp, op. cit., p. 118.
\textsuperscript{23} 19 May, 1913.
The Liberals in Britain were continuing to suffer defeats and setbacks in by-elections. The Conservatives and Unionists argued that this reflected a widespread reaction against Home Rule; Home Rulers and Liberals tended to argue that the setbacks were due either to the presence of Labour candidates or to tariff reform or to the Insurance Act. In May 1913 a by-election was held in Altrincham, a seat which had been a Liberal stronghold but which had gone to the Conservatives by 119 votes at the preceding general election. In this by-election no Labour candidate complicated the contest, and the Cork Examiner having closely followed the campaign had concluded that this by-election was a clear test case of British opinion regarding Home Rule. The newspaper clearly expected a Liberal victory, but the Conservative majority increased more than tenfold to 1262 and nothing more was said of the Altrincham test case.24 Later that year the Liberals held on to Linlithgow but with a considerably reduced majority and the Conservatives won Reading.25

Such an accumulation of signs of the way British public opinion was moving did shake the commitment to Home Rule at least of some members of the Party. For the moment, however, the Government continued to give satisfactory assurances of its determination to proceed with the measure. John Redmond

24Cork Examiner, 29 and 30 May, 1913.
25Irish Weekly Independent, 15 October, 1913.
was still predicting that Home Rule was "as certain as the rising of tomorrow's sun".\textsuperscript{26} This assertion was given plausibility by Mr. Asquith when, in early July, for the first time in its history the Irish Parliamentary Party dined a British Prime Minister.\textsuperscript{27} Other Cabinet ministers gave solemn assurances: Walter Runciman, speaking to the Dewsbury Liberal Association, gave further confirmation for Redmond's optimism saying that the supremacy of parliament would be upheld against all means, powers or conspiracies.\textsuperscript{28} By October, leaders of the Irish Party were manifesting uneasiness about the apparent willingness of some Liberals to accept some form of Ulster exclusion. The principle of Home Rule itself, however, seemed safe, and Winston Churchill in Dundee and later in Manchester confirmed the determination of the Cabinet to see Home Rule through.\textsuperscript{29} But the most satisfactory assurances came from the Prime Minister himself speaking at Ladybank in East Fife when he said:

Now gentlemen - and I am sure you will agree with me here - ought the actions of statesmen in a matter which has reached this stage be affected or deflected simply by the menace of forcible resistance to the execution of the law. The doctrines preached for the last two years in the North of Ireland which I regret to say have received countenance from responsible quarters in this country are doctrines, which in my opinion are the negation of the first principle of a Parliamentary and still more democratic government. It is sufficient for my purpose to ask one question

\textsuperscript{26}Ibid., 5 July, 1913.

\textsuperscript{27}Freeman's Journal, 11 July, 1913.

\textsuperscript{28}Irish Independent, 11 August, 1913.

\textsuperscript{29}Cork Examiner, 9 and 20 October, 1913.
and it is this. If the Ulster minority is entitled to resist the Home Rule Act by force, what possible answer could be made to a like claim put forward by the mass of the Irish people if they should be frustrated in the prosecution of a perfectly constitutional demand in which they have the support of a large majority of the elected representatives of Great Britain - I say what possible answer could be made to a claim upon their part to paralyze the Government of Ireland? No, we are not, and shall not be intimidated by the threat of force. I have more then once expressed the hope and the belief that the new system of Government in Ireland would be brought into operation without any recourse, or any need for recourse, to the armed forces of the Crown, but if a statute deliberately enacted by Parliament were to be met by organized and armed resistance, it would clearly be, not only right, but the duty of the Executive to assert the authority of the law by every appropriate and adequate measure:

He then stated the specific commitment of his Government and there was here something to create apprehension in the Irish Parliamentary Party:

In the first place, nothing is to be done which will interfere with the setting up in Dublin of a subordinate Irish Parliament with an Executive responsible to it. That is this root of our principle and our Bill. From that we can not and shall not depart. In the second place, nothing shall be done which would erect a permanent or an insuperable barrier in the way of Irish unity; and in the third place, while the importance - which no one realizes more than we do here - the importance of the extension of the principle of Devolution in appropriate forms to other parts of the United Kingdom is fully realized, the claim of Ireland is prior in point of urgency and must be dealt with.30

The following day Sir Edward Grey echoed the Prime Minister's determination to meet violence with violence.31 From this time on, however, the threat of at least temporary partition

31Freeman's Journal, 28 October, 1913.
was a very real one.

There is no doubt that the government was subject at this period to severe value conflict. Obligations had been incurred towards the Irish Parliamentary Party and towards Ireland. The Irish Party had so far been prosecuting its goal with a moderation and restraint unusual in Irish politics. The Liberal Party saw in the Home Rule measure then before Parliament promise of an end to the problem of Ireland and the means of exorcizing the ghost of Gladstone. On the other hand there was sympathy among many Liberals for the plight of the Protestants of Ulster in particular and not much liking for the Roman Catholicism of the Irish majority. The apparent destiny of Irish Protestants placed under the rule of a Roman Catholic legislature was not one which was envied by British nonconformists who constituted an important segment of the Liberal Party. What few if any Liberals could countenance, however, were the tactics being used and encouraged by the unionists: Drilling, intimidation and subversion of the law. The Cabinet in 1913 was trying to live up to its commitment to the Irish Nationalists despite its divided sympathies.

The apparent determination of the Government was met with stubborn resistance, defiance and considerable verbal violence on the part of Sir Edward Carson and his allies. On the twelfth of July in Belfast Sir Edward Carson announced the plans of the Ulster Unionist Council to take over the
government of Ulster in the event of the passage of the Home Rule Bill.\textsuperscript{32} Ironically Ulster Unionists were envisaging a unilaterial declaration of independence and were prepared to assume more extensive power in Ulster than the Home Rule Bill envisaged for Ireland.\textsuperscript{33} A few days later, while reviewing a body of Ulster Volunteers in Lisburn, Sir Edward belligerently reiterated implacable opposition to the idea of Home Rule:

... I ask this splendid body of men I have before me never to have absent from their minds what they are resisting and preparing to resist in the future, even if force becomes necessary, is the attempt on the part of the government to inflict upon them the greatest and most insulting outrage which has ever been inflicted upon a loyal and contented people, not merely to turn you out of the government under which you were born but to put you under the heels of men whose whole history and whose whole ideals you loathe and detest.\textsuperscript{34}

He would repeat much the same sentiments throughout Ulster until the actual setting up of the Provisional Government in September.\textsuperscript{35} In November Mr. Bonar Law and Sir Edward Carson appeared at the Theatre Royal in Dublin and addressed southern unionists. The Leader of the Opposition offered some comfort to his audience giving it as his 'candid opinion' that the government assurances of willingness to use force if necessary to secure the establishment of Home Rule was "bluff", and that the government would eventually

\textsuperscript{32}Cork Examiner, 14 July, 1913.

\textsuperscript{33}See David Kennedy, "Ulster Unionism and the New Nationalism" in Kevin B. Nowlan, The Making of 1916, op. cit., p. 79.

\textsuperscript{34}Cork Examiner, 23 July, 1913.

\textsuperscript{35}Ibid., 25 September, 1913.
climb down. He did offer one 'concession' which in view of the evolution of public opinion in Britain did not amount to a serious departure from his previous stand, but he did say that:

Rightly or wrongly, we have stated and our party has ratified it, that if the question of Home Rule be submitted to the people, and if the verdict is against us, so far as we, the leaders of the Unionist Party are concerned, we shall bow to that decision, but if not, let there be no mistake, we cannot in honour go back, and we never shall go back from the pledge which we have given to the people of Ulster. They will not submit, and we shall not allow them to be coerced.\(^{36}\)

What is noticeable here is the prominence of the commitment specifically to Ulster. The unionist goal continued to be the wrecking of Home Rule but the official Unionist position by late 1913 was based on the enormity of placing the Protestants of Ulster under the unsympathetic rule of the Roman Catholics of the rest of Ireland. Armed resistance was promised but only if there was an attempt to force Ulster within the scope of Home Rule. The organization of armed resistance to Home Rule in the rest of Ireland was impracticable and southern unionists were compelled, albeit reluctantly, to place all of their hopes on the "Orange Card".

The Irish Parliamentary Party, confident of their hold over the Liberal Government on the Home Rule question, treated the Ulster Unionist performance with a contempt which was as ill-advised as it was ill-disguised. John Redmond, John Dillon and other leaders of the Irish Party frequently asserted

\(^{36}\)Irish Times, 28 November, 1913.
that Ulster would not fight. This conclusion was widespread and was endorsed by no less than the Roman Catholic Primate, Cardinal Logue, who, on the occasion of a church dedication in Muleek, commented: "Of course, we are threatened with rebellion at the present day but there is little substance in the threat, and I think the trouble will pass away just like the breeze on the face of the lake down there". 37 Leading articles in the Nationalist press clearly reflected the Irish Party contempt; The Cork Examiner of 2 August, 1913, was typical of this tendency when it described the political climate of the United Kingdom in the following terms:

While the Irish people and their Liberal allies are awaiting with dignity and tranquillity the inevitable triumph, by Parliamentary legislation, and the efforts of Mr. Redmond and the Irish Party, of the National Idea, it is amusing and instructive to watch the uneasy irritation and incoherence plainly visible among their opponents.

Reaction to developments in Ulster throughout 1913 was generally of this character. The Ulster unionists were dismissed as incoherent and as driven into disarray by the least pronouncement of the Irish Parliamentary Party leadership and, by implication at least, as in the statement quoted above, as not really being part of the Irish people. While the political exclusion of any part of Ulster was resisted by the Nationalists, the antecedent psychological partition was never even attacked.

37 Irish Weekly Independent, 5 July, 1913.
At the end of September John Redmond still exuded confidence and when he was interviewed in Killarney, he declared: "The whole Carsonian plan is crassly stupid. Nationalists are not a bit alarmed, but have the utmost confidence that the Irish question is going to be settled now, and in the only way". On the eve of that interview in Cahirciveen he had replied to the urgings of William O'Brien's All-for-Ireland League to seek a compromise solution through conference with the unionists saying:

I am told that we ought to agree to any conference without any condition whatever. That is to say that, having succeeded, after thirty years of unparalleled sacrifice and labour, in convincing the electorate of Great Britain and a large majority in the House of Commons of the justice and necessity of an Irish Parliament and Executive, and having seen a Bill to carry that principle passed twice by a majority of over one hundred and on the eve, to-day, of its final passage, we should now in face of Sir Edward Carson's arrogant and irreconcilable declaration, to into a conference where the whole question of the principle of Home Rule would be put back once again into the melting pot. That we cannot and will not do.

In September, 1913 there was considerable justification for such a stand but events were soon to take a turn which would drastically weaken the strength of the moral hold of the Irish Parliamentary Party over the Liberal government. From this time on partition in at least a temporary form was a possibility, particularly as the unionists were relying more and more on exclusion as their policy on Home Rule.

In October Joe Devlin, speaking in Dundalk, declared in

38Cork Examiner, 30 September, 1913.

39Freeman's Journal, 29 September, 1913.
forceful terms that Nationalists would never accept partition and a few days later John Redmond pledged, to a huge Home Rule rally in Limerick:

That Irish Nationalists can never be assenting parties to the mutilation of the Irish nation.

The two nation theory is to us an abomination and a blasphemy. Ulster is as much a part of Ireland as Munster. We know in our idea of the Irish nation, no district, no county, no province, we know no race, no creed, no class.41

This, the Cork Examiner asserted, totally destroyed the unionist plan for exclusion and the unionist position was declared hopeless. "Mr. Redmond's statemanship has outmaneuvered Sir Edward Carson at every point".42 Other Irish Party members were making similar statements like that of P. J. Brady who confidently predicted that "with the birth of self-government, political differences, as we have known them, will disappear".43

Mr. Bonar Law speaking at Wallsend at the end of October seemed oblivious to the fact that the unionist plan for exclusion had been totally destroyed and he forecast civil war should the government not relent.44 Joseph Devlin, in Keightly to support the candidacy of Sir Stanley Buckmaster, reiterated the Irish Party's position with regard to exclusion:

Our demand is this - An Irish Parliament elected by

40 Irish Weekly Independent, 11 October, 1913.
41 Freeman's Journal, 13 October, 1913.
42 14 October, 1913.
43 Freeman's Journal, 15 October, 1913.
44 Ibid., 30 October, 1913.
the people, discharging all the domestic business and carrying out all the domestic functions that appertain to Ireland under the Imperial authority - An Ireland undivided, that is the minimum of our demand. We will not allow any part of Ireland to be divorced from any other part. We would refuse Home Rule tomorrow if Ulster, or any portion of Ulster were cut off from the rest of Ireland.45

The expression of sentiments such as these were not confined to the Irish Parliamentary Party, and T. M. Healy, then in the All-for-Ireland League, declared that for his part he "should prefer to abandon the Home Rule Bill altogether than to accept a scheme by which an Alsace would be artificially created in the British Empire".46 This stand was probably given some encouragement by Sir Edward Carson's disclaimer that he had any intention of provoking or engaging in a civil war. The resistance and defiance which he preached was to be understood to involve only the non-payment of taxes.47

Ominous for the prospect of Home Rule, however, was the mobilization of British public opinion in support of the Ulster unionists. In November it was estimated that in Wales alone between eight and nine thousand men were ready to come to the assistance of the Unionists of Ulster, and the following resolution was sent to Mr. Bonar Law.

We, the Central Committee and 150 agents of the British League for the support of Ulster and the Union desire to inform the leaders of the Unionist Party that we are engaged in enrolling a large force of volunteers from England, Scotland and Wales to assist the Ulster loyalists,

45 *Cork Examiner*, 1 November, 1913.
46 *Irish Weekly Independent*, 6 December, 1913.
47 Ibid., 8 November, 1913.
and intend to proceed with this force to Ireland to re-inforce the ranks of the Ulster men in the event of the government employing the army and the navy to compel their submission without consulting the constituencies at a General Election. 48

At the end of the year T. P. O'Connor outlined the Party's current attitude regarding exclusion proposals to an American audience in Chicago during an Irish Party fund raising tour. He referred to the fact that Unionist claims had escalated from demanding the exclusion of four counties to demanding the exclusion of six counties and not on a temporary but on a permanent basis, and he assured his audience that, "they will never get such terms or anything like them. Mr. Asquith will not give them, and if he could be conceived capable of giving them, the Irish Nationalists would prefer to wreck the Home Rule Bill and the government to sanctioning the mutilation of Ireland." 49 These determined words amounted to a very firm commitment on the part of the Irish Party not to countenance permanent exclusion. Discussion of temporary exclusion was generally avoided.

The tragedy here was that the anti-partition stand of the Irish Party was partly bluff just as was the stand of the unionists. The unionists were certainly not courting civil war but by threatening civil war they hoped to win a peaceful victory. The Irish Party was neither politically nor psychologically in a position to reject their sole goal, the product of decades of propaganda to persuade

48 *Freeman's Journal*, 10 November, 1913.
49 *Cork Examiner*, 30 December, 1913.
Ireland and Britain and not least themselves of its desirability. They could hardly reject it, yet they hoped that by threatening the Government they might stiffen its resolve to grant Home Rule to all Ireland. In 1913 they were winning to the extent that the commitment of the Government remained strong, but the crucial element in this game of bluff between unionists and nationalists was British public opinion. In the wooing of that opinion the unionists enjoyed certain crucial advantages associated with comparatively more complete social, religious and economic integration. Even those Englishmen who were persuaded that England ought to loosen its hold over a reluctant Ireland were hesitant at the prospect of forcing out those Irish with whom they could best identify and sympathize. Southern Roman Catholic Irishmen were easily perceived as alien, and the Ulster unionists' claim not to be forced under such an alien domination against their will struck a responsive chord among many in Britain and not only among those who were habitual supporters of the Conservatives.

Inevitably, the religious divisions of the country continued to deepen the political divisions and thus reinforce the source of identification between English public opinion and Ulster Unionism based on a common distrust of Roman Catholicism, of the agricultural community and of the 'mere' Irish for whom there was considerable contempt in England where the majority of them were employed in menial and
unskilled jobs. In Ireland Home Rule was known to be supported by many members of the hierarchy and clergy of the Roman Catholic Church. The upper echelons of the United Irish League contained a number of bishops, and Irish Parliamentary Party nominating convention were usually presided over by Roman Catholic priests. The 1913 Lenten Pastorals reiterated the themes of the evils of immoral literature and of drunkenness and also the dangers to the faith from various sources. In Dublin the condemnation of secret societies was repeated and some of the more political bishops welcomed the Home Rule Bill. Dr. O'Dwyer of Limerick and Dr. Foley of Kildare and Leighlin, while welcoming the prospect of Home Rule, avoided any expression of gratitude to the British Government for its passage. Dr. O'Dwyer treated it as a natural though long overdue fulfilling of God's plan. Dr. Foley wrote to his charges:

We are frequently charged with disloyalty; and if by disloyalty is meant the utter absence of all those feelings which loyalty is supposed to connote, the allegation is true as far as the majority of our people are concerned. Not only are we not loyal in this sense, but we would be angels and not human beings if we were. but the greatest single benefit which he expected to derive from Home Rule was a drastic curtailing of the spread of socialistic and agnostic literature. This theme was taken up by the Reverend M. Phelan S.J. in the Lenten lectures which he gave at the Church of St. Francis Xavier:

50 *Freeman's Journal*, 3 February, 1913.

51 *Irish Weekly Independent*, 8 February, 1913.
Thick as snowflakes but without their whiteness, the sensuous and infidel Press of England were daily despatching their messages of evil upon this land to the detriment of faith and morals. On the quays of their city alone there were tons of such literature discharged. In comparison with this he believed that the bayonets of Cromwell or the plantations of James did not threaten half the destruction threatened by that silent army now encamped on the soil.52

The Vigilance Committees operating in many Irish parishes were church related and prone to being addressed by members of the clergy who frequently denounced in strong terms the "evil literature" usually identified as coming from England. One Vigilance Committee which stands as an exception was the S S. Michael and John Vigilance Committee. As Father Costello put it to this Committee at the end of March: "On one side was Virtue and Erin, and on the other immorality and consequent loss of faith and Nationality."53 The link between "Faith" by which Roman Catholicism was always understood and "Nationality" was one which clerics frequently used at this time, not without some effect on the fears of Protestants. A lay member of the S S. Michael and John Vigilance Committee, Mr. T. J. Loughlin, said, a few weeks after Fr. Costello's talk, that "in fighting the evil of immoral literature they were fighting against terrible odds. Many Continental Jews and Atheists were flooding the markets with papers of this kind. If those who sold these publications did not stop selling them they would close up their shops."54

52Irish Weekly Independent, 1 March, 1913.
53Freeman's Journal, 1 April, 1913.
54Ibid., 14 April, 1913.
There were difficulties involved in closing up shops informally while demand remained high and as Fr. Cullen, S.J. pointed out later to the Dublin Vigilance Committee, Home Rule provided the opportunity for far more effective action than was then possible. Fr. Cullen said that: "One of the first things he hoped to see carried through in the new Irish Parliament was a measure constituting a censorship on the press".\(^{55}\) In view of what had at times been found to be 'objectionable literature' by such Committees, the prospect of censorship under Home Rule was unlikely to be reassuring to those who did not share the Roman Catholic Nationalist ideology embodied in the Vigilance Committees.

There were other occasions which allowed Roman Catholic clerics to make even less reassuring comments about Protestantism. Father J. Gwynne, S.J. delivered two addresses in Dublin in May 1913, and the press report of his address on "Protestantism and Progress" to the Catholic Defence Society quoted him as saying that:

He did not want to be misunderstood as denying all commercial pursuits and industrial effort, but he did deny them as carried on in Belfast, in England, and in Protestant centres generally. The Catholic Church wills industry, blesses honest toil as Christ blessed it by His example, but she does not wish that body and soul should be damned for the sake of dollars, but believes and fearlessly proclaims that "It profiteth nothing to a man if he gain the whole world and loses his own soul". While Protestantism proclaims it profiteth nothing to a man to gain his own soul if he loses the whole world.\(^{56}\)

\(^{55}\) Ibid., 19 May, 1913.

\(^{56}\) Ibid., 23 May, 1913.
A few days later the same speaker attacked Protestant proselytism masquerading as charitable works in Ireland, and he concluded that "the horrors enacted in the Pagan days of the martyrs and the Coliseum were not more cruel or heartless than what was fashionable in the twentieth century in Catholic Ireland, in the midst of such an intensely Catholic community as lived in Dublin".  

Father Brennan from Tralee concluded a paper presented to the Maynooth Union in June with a list of some of the charges which he levelled at the English in Ireland.

1) being responsible for the circumstance to be encountered in some districts in Ireland of the priest not understanding the language of the people, and the people not understanding the language of the priest.

2) the people not knowing as much as they should of their Faith.

3) Irish people abroad losing their Faith.

4) no truly Catholic education being available in the land.

5) the hurtful influence of bad literature from England.

The remedy proposed for these ills was the revival of the Irish language. A similar hope, though a more active one, was entertained by Irish Freedom:

Those of us who desire the freedom of Ireland...long sometimes for a wonderful force that, working like dynamite, would blow up British rule in this country, leaving no trace here of the might of England, save the shattered fragments of British institutions and creations and instruments of government.

57 Irish Weekly Independent, 31 May, 1913.

58 Freeman's Journal, 27 June, 1913.
We want a kind of spiritual dynamite to blow sky-high the chains of England on our minds and hearts and souls. And I see much a dynamite at hand whose usefulness is hardly recognized by many of us, The Irish language.  

The clerical attitude outlined here, the prominence given in Nationalist newspapers to conversions to Roman Catholicism of prominent people in the whole of the British Isles and in particular to those of Protestant clergymen, and the frequently voiced opinion that Home Rule would be a prelude to a magnificent efflorescence of the faith contributed to the fears of many Protestants at the prospect of Home Rule.

The feeling of isolation of some Dublin Protestants is evident in the comments of the Dean of St. Patrick when moving the adoption of the annual report at the 1913 meeting of the Committee of Management of the Adelaide Hospital. The Dean remarked:

... that they had good reason to congratulate themselves on the success of the hospital during the year. It was a great thing to feel that the members of their Church could come to that hospital and feel that they would not be boycotted on account of their religion. They should note that it was their hospital and they should be proud to support it.  

It was, however, in the north-east of Ireland that denunciation of Home Rule by Protestants was most vociferous and frequently intemperate. In June the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland met in Belfast and, with the strong endorsement of the representatives of the Scottish brethren, passed

59 February, 1913.  
60 Freeman's Journal, 30 April, 1913.
a resolution opposing Home Rule by 921 to 43 votes. The Freeman's Journal with its customary lack of sensitivity for Protestant opinion dismissed the resolution as "only part of the elaborate scheme of make-believe by which the Unionist wire-pullers hope to impress, or rather overawe, the masses of Great Britain". Barely veiled advocacy of violence was preached in Londonderry's Protestant Cathedral on the occasion of the Apprentice Boys' parade by the Rector of Limavady, the Rev. R. G. S. King. Rev. King referred back to James II whose reign had demonstrated that a Roman Catholic King was inconsistent with a free Protestant nation but in the speaker's opinion such a state of affairs would have been preferable to a Roman Catholic Parliament with a Protestant King. Such a Parliament which was now proposed for Ireland would be controlled by Rome and the speaker concluded by exhorting the congregation "to meet a danger similar to that which existed 224 years ago in the same way as their ancestors did". The Home Rule struggle brought out into the open religious, political, economic and social animosities evolved over centuries, and both sides resorted to symbols such as "Rome", "immoral literature" or "proselytism" to represent a whole gamut of hostilities which were often ill-perceived or ill-differentiated by those who felt them.

Church of Ireland and Roman Catholic Bishops tended to

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61 Ibid., 7 June, 1913.
62 Ibid.
63 Irish Weekly Independent, 16 August, 1913.
use more temperate language than the lower clergy, but representative members of both hierarchies unmistakably stated their positions. Dr. Peacocke, the Church of Ireland Archbishop of Dublin, referred to the Home Rule Bill "as a menace to our religious and civil liberties" and he went on to say:

As Irishmen who love our country, and ardently desire its peace and prosperity, we look upon this Bill as filled with dangers to the best interests of our own land. If it should become law, we see before us a future, not of peace and good will but of confusion and strife, which must be destructive of all hope of our country's happiness and prosperity. We have, indeed, good reason to be anxious, but we do not abandon faith or hope.64

Dr. Crozier, the Primate of Ireland, made his position clear at the Armagh Diocesan Synod where he pictured Home Rule as an unmitigated disaster for Ireland and for Irishmen both Protestant and Roman Catholic. "Our hearts", he said, "are filled with fear should the present Home Rule Bill become law", and he advised prayer on bended knee for the salvation of Ireland as Abraham Lincoln had prayed for the salvation of another union.65 The attitude of the Roman Catholic hierarchy was reflected by Dr. O'Dwyer, who would after the Easter Rising deny having ever had any confidence in John Redmond or ever having praised him. The Bishop of Limerick wrote, in concluding a letter expressing regret at his inability to attend a Home Rule meeting in his diocese: "If I might add

64 Freeman's Journal, 21 October, 1913.
65 Ibid., 24 October, 1913.
a personal remark, I should wish to express my admiration of the great power and dignity with which Mr. Redmond has led the national movement to its present position". 66 Later the Roman Catholic hierarchy and Dr. O'Dwyer in particular would be severely antagonized by a proposal of the Chief Secretary for a grant in aid of intermediary education. The grant would have been welcomed, but, in order to satisfy the Liberal Party's nonconformist supporters, Mr. Birrell had included as a requirement in order to qualify for the grant that each school must have at least one lay teacher for each forty pupils. This requirement was interpreted by the Roman Catholic bishops as an insidious move to destroy the religious character of Irish education and Mr. Birrell was roundly condemned. 67

There was little disagreement within the ranks of Irish Parliamentary Party supporters during 1913, but what was next to Home Rule the most divisive and explosive issue of politics in that year did not fail to cause some disarray. Early in 1913 the House of Commons had a free vote on the issue of votes for women and most of the Irish Party's members voted with the majority against the proposal to allow women to vote, but seven members of the Irish Party supported the extension of the suffrage. Some of those who voted against the measure gave as a reason for their stand that such

66 *Cork Examiner*, 9 October, 1913.
67 *Freeman's Journal*, 19 December, 1913.
questions ought to be deferred until after Home Rule, that the time of Parliament should be spent settling the Irish question and that female suffrage was in effect a red herring. There is no doubt that had female suffrage been approved, much parliamentary time would have had to be devoted to it and to related questions, thus in all likelihood interfering with the progress of Home Rule. On the other hand the tactics of the suffragettes assured them that a great deal of parliamentary time was in any case devoted to their cause. Ireland experienced comparatively little suffragette agitation though there were a few bombs placed in theatres and shots fired at political rallies. The reaction of the grass-roots of the Irish Parliamentary Party can be gauged from a resolution passed unaminously by the Glasnevin Division of the Ancient Order of Hibernians shortly after the House of Commons defeated the Women's Suffrage Bill. The resolution read:

That we congratulate the majority of the members of the Irish Party on their action in opposing the Women's Suffrage Bill, and heartily thank those Irish members who, by helping to secure its defeat, removed a serious obstacle in the path of Home Rule, and that we cannot refrain from expressing our amazement at and condemnation of the conduct of Messrs. Boland, Gwynne, Hazleton, Lynch, O'Shee, W. H. K. Redmond, and White in placing their Suffragette sympathies above the cause of Ireland a Nation. 68

The Cork United Irish League took a similar stand: that the suffrage movement should not be allowed to distract Irishmen and Irishwomen from the national cause. 69 One

68 Ibid., 10 May, 1913.
69 Cork Examiner, 8 May, 1913.
result of this stand taken by the Irish Parliamentary Party and by its supporters at home was that a suffragette contingent publicly took part in the Wolfe Tone Memorial Pilgrimage at Bodenstown, the extreme nationalists not having taken any position on the issue.  

One issue which did more damage both to the self-confidence and to the prestige of the Irish Party was the Cunard Company's decision to discontinue mail stops at Queenstown. The reason advanced by the Company for its action was that the seven hundred and ninety foot length of the 'Lusitania' and 'Mauritania' which were taking over the New York run made Queenstown harbour unsafe. There was rare unanimity in the Unionist and Nationalist press of Ireland in condemning this decision. The Irish Parliamentary Party took up the issue and approached the Postmaster-General in an attempt to secure a reversal of the Cunard decision on the basis that it violated the company's contractual obligations to the Post Office. The company mustered a certain amount of expert evidence which was accepted by the Post Office, and the Irish Party failed in its attempt. This failure was made more galling by the fact that the 'Olympic' of the White Star Lines continued for a time to call at Queenstown despite being larger than the Cunarders. The issue became one with

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70 Irish Weekly Independent, 28 June, 1913.
71 Cork Examiner, 13 August, 1913.
72 Ibid., 15 August, 1913.
which the All-for-Ireland League was able to embarrass the Irish Parliamentary Party. The importance of the issue lies in that it demonstrated the weakness of Irish interests when pitted against a giant British enterprise even when Unionists and Nationalists were in agreement. The Union failed once more. It also underlined the fact that Redmond's position in holding the balance of power in the House of Commons was radically different from Parnell's. The fact that there was a Home Rule Bill going through Parliament and that only the Liberals could be expected to see it through robbed the Irish Party of any freedom of action unless Home Rule was to be abandoned, and the Cunard issue was simply not sufficiently important to warrant such a sacrifice. The issue was important in Cork, however, and the popularity of the Irish Parliamentary Party reached such a low point that the Party did not nominate a candidate to contest the North Cork by-election of that year, leaving the field open for the All-for-Ireland candidates.

The Irish-Ireland movement and the extreme separatists were pursuing their goals throughout the year but on the whole without coming into direct conflict with the Irish Parliamentary Party. Patrick Pearse, Joseph Plunkett and Thomas MacDonagh, who would earn fame a few years later in a different kind of drama, all had plays performed in early 1913. Patrick Pearse was also chosen by Thomas Clarke

73 Ibid., 11 September, 1913.
74 Freeman's Journal, 24 October, 1913.
75 Ibid., 16 May and 26 April, 1913.
to deliver the oration at the Wolfe Tone Memorial Pilgrimage in June. One of the biographers of Patrick Pearse has written that according to Pearse himself "he was a harmless literary nationalist and not a dangerous man until October, 1915". If this is so then Patrick Pearse must have considered much of his literary output prior to that time as pure rhetoric not intended to be taken seriously. He may of course have meant that until October, 1915 he would have found a Home Rule settlement acceptable as a starting point, but already at Bodenstown in 1913 he manifested his great admiration for those who were prepared to imitate Tone in the use of non-constitutional methods. His oration ended on a note which clearly seemed to call for more than parliamentary manoeuvring at Westminster:

Ireland one and Ireland free - is not this the definition of Ireland a Nation? To that definition and to that programme we declare our adhesion anew; pledging ourselves as Tone pledged himself - and in this sacred place, by this graveside, let us now pledge ourselves to follow in the steps of Tone, never to rest, either by day or by night until his work be accomplished, deeming it the proudest of all privileges to fight for freedom, to fight not in despondence, but in great joy, hoping for the victory in our day, but fighting on whether victory seem near or far, never lowering our ideal, never bartering one jot or tittle of our birthright, holding faith in the memory and the inspiration of Tone, and accounting ourselves base as long as we endure the evil thing against which he testified with his blood.


77 Padraig H. Pearse, Political Writings and Speeches, op. cit., p. 63.
In July, as part of a series of articles contributed to *Irish Freedom* under the collective title "From a Hermitage", Pearse wrote that if Home Rule failed to come about, "I believe that if we who hold the full national faith have but the courage to step forward we shall succeed more easily than most people suppose in gaining the people's adhesion to our ideals and our methods - lesser ideals having proved unattainable and wiser methods more foolish". The methods were unspecified and Pearse was probably not yet thinking in terms of an armed rebellion capturing Dublin, but he was thinking in terms of arms and the extreme nationalists were bound to read in his comments an endorsement of 'physical force'.

The political extremists were becoming more active and their influence can be traced in the Gaelic movement in particular. Their tracks were however, well covered: Sinn Fein openly published "Facts about the British Army", but when a discussion took place in the House of Commons on anti-recruiting literature circulating in Ireland, John Redmond attributed many of the other pamphlets to a branch of the Unionist Party. Complaints were heard within the Gaelic League about increasing politicization by extremists and Eamonn Ceannt, who as a senior employee of Dublin

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79 *Freeman's Journal*, 19 April, 1913; *Cork Examiner*, 15 July, 1913; W. Alison Phillips: *The Revolution in Ireland*, op. cit., p. 67 lists some of the scurrilous expressions of this propaganda and argues that it influenced the attitude of the military towards the Irish in later confrontations.
Corporation was not suspected of being a member of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, wrote an open letter protesting against the allegations of Canon Arthur Ryan that a political party was trying to annex the movement. The I.R.B. mask, however, was slipping; and later in July when Dr. Douglas Hyde was re-elected as chairman of the Gaelic League, he felt constrained to protest against the intrusion of politics into the League. At the Ard Feis that year the Coiste Gnotha was reduced from fifty to thirty at Dr. Hyde's insistence in order to purge the extremists, but according to one commentator the move failed and the new membership of thirty contained nineteen extremists. This majority continued to operate clandestinely and protested that the League was non-political. This was a sensible precaution at this time because the League was an extremely useful open and public organization disseminating separatist propaganda. The idea of cultural separation had long been central to the ideology of the League, and acceptance of that idea made the transition to political separatism easier. Even members of the Irish Parliamentary Party contributed to the spreading of the notion of cultural separatism. Mr. T. O'Donnell, M. P., for example, addressed a League meeting in Duigh in December and said that:

The race was as Irish in its ideals and character today as it was 300 years ago, and though the language had suffered much from fierce official repression during the past centuries, it was still

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80 Freeman's Journal, 9 July, 1913.
81 Sean ÓLuing, I Die In A Good Cause, op. cit., p. 57.
a living language, spoken by the people and loved by them, linking them in one unbroken chain with their ancestors of 2,000 years ago, marking them out as a separate and distinct race, with their place and duty in God's great planet.\textsuperscript{82}

In November, 1913, Patrick Pearse, the "harmless literary nationalist", published an article on 'The Coming Revolution' in which he asserted that the Gaelic League, while it had been a prophet, was not the Messiah which would save Ireland and that it was now a spent force. He forecast the necessity of bloodshed to achieve Irish nationhood regardless of whether or not Home Rule was realized. In one of his better known passages he wrote:

\begin{quote}
We must accustom ourselves to the thought of arms, to the sight of arms, to the use of arms. We may make mistakes in the beginning and shoot the wrong people, but bloodshed is a cleansing and sanctifying thing, and the nation which regards it as the final horror has lost its manhood. There are many things more horrible than bloodshed; and slavery is one of them.\textsuperscript{83}
\end{quote}

In another article of the same month published in \textit{Irish Freedom} he wrote "Better wipe out Ireland in one year's civil war than let England slowly bleed her to death". Pearse's avowed purpose in these articles written for \textit{Irish Freedom} throughout 1913 was to goad Irishmen into committing themselves to an armed movement. In Ulster the unionists had already made such a move and this influenced Pearse's advocacy of a similar disposition in the rest of Ireland. In fact such a step was about to be taken in nationalist Ireland.

\textsuperscript{82}\textit{Freeman's Journal}, 12 December, 1913.

\textsuperscript{83}\textit{Padraig Pearse, Political Writings and Speeches}, op. cit., pp. 91 - 99, quotation from pp. 98 - 99.
All through 1913 the Ulster Volunteer Force grew into a sizeable organization. According to police estimates its membership in April stood at 41,000, by the end of September it was estimated at 56,551 and at the end of November at 76,757.\(^8^4\) The rapid growth of this movement probably owed something to developments which took place in Athlone and Dublin during October and November.

During the summer of 1913 the Irish Republican Brotherhood under the inspiration of Bulmer Hobson had begun drilling, The Fianna was training young boys in the use of arms, and Sinn Feiners were exercising their marksmanship every Sunday. The newspapers were full of reports of the parades and martial displays of the Ulster Volunteer Force. The I.R.B. attitude under these circumstances has been described by Bulmer Hobson:

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\ldots \text{a new factor arose in Ireland which was watched by the I.R.B. with the deepest interest. This was the decision of the Orange Party in Ulster to resist Home Rule by force of arms. Here was a development of the first importance, for if the North could arm against Home Rule, and get away with it, the rest of Ireland would soon be shaken out of its foolish belief in Constitutional agitation and would be compelled to arm also; and if on the other hand, the Ulstermen were suppressed by English forces the wayward loyalty of the Northern province would probably take some orientation which would enable North and South to come together on a basis of common antagonism to English interference in the affairs of Ireland.}^{8^5}
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It may have taken an imagination well steeped in nationalist mythology to expect the Ulster unionists to lie down with


\(^8^5\) Bulmer Hobson: "Foundation and Growth of the Irish Volunteers, 1913-14", op. cit., p. 16.
the I.R.B. extremists, but the times were undoubtedly ex-
citing for the physical force men. In that last year of
peace there was a climate of violence throughout all of
Europe as well as in Ireland. In England the suffragettes
were throwing and placing bombs and shooting at prominent
politicians. One of the factors which after the Easter
Rising would account for Major Sir Francis Vane's unpopularity
with the War Office was that in early November, 1913, he
offered to command a Volunteer army modeled on the Ulster
Volunteer Force to defend suffragettes.86

In this climate and with the exhortations of Patrick
Pearse in Irish Freedom it is not surprising that the idea
of an Irish armed force should have been current among the
'physical force' advocates. The Irish Republican Brotherhood
was aware that the Irish Parliamentary Party backed by Irish
public opinion would easily destroy any force which it might
set up, and Sean T. O'Kelly has described the cautious optimisms
of the extremists at this time.

It is certain that from 1912 onwards, the question
of acquiring openly and publicly a volunteer force
was often discussed among members of the Irish
Republican Brotherhood in and around Dublin. Many
times branches of the I.R.B. sent recommendations
to their superiors urging such action. Frequently
I had talks with Tom Clarke and Sean MacDermott
about the wisdom of taking action in that direction.
I well remember often seeing Tom Clarke rubbing his
hands with glee when speaking about the reports of
Ulster Volunteer activity. "Let them fire away,
the more they organize the better", he would say;

86Freeman's Journal, 6 November, 1913.
"Aren't they setting us a splendid example? Soon, very soon we will be following in their footsteps. But let us take our time. Don't let us act hastily. We must see to it that the first step is taken by the right people. We - that is the I.R.B. - should not show our hand too easily. Others will take action. That is sure to come soon. Then we can step in behind and guide and direct them, and our men can get active, organizing and recruiting."

Action was taken in October but not at all by the 'right people' from the I.R.B. point of view. The Midland Volunteer Force was formed in Athlone in early October, 1913; and by the time it held its first general parade on the 11th October, it numbered over one thousand men including a squadron of cavalry. The corps was openly set up to oppose the Ulster Volunteer Force and to defend the Roman Catholics of Ulster should that become necessary. The movement was anathema to the I.R.B. and to the extremist fringe; the O'Rahilly would later stubbornly deny their existence despite the fact that Eoin MacNeill had referred to the force in his correspondence with the O'Rahilly. What made the Midland Volunteer Force so unpopular was that six out of the eight organizers were British Army Reservists as was a large proportion of the membership and that at their second parade the Force subscribed to a declaration of loyalty to the King. Evidently such

88 Freeman's Journal, 15 October, 1913.
an organization was not likely to prove easy for the I.R.B. to infiltrate and take over, to "step behind and direct". The drilling of the Fianna boys and of the I.R.B. men would not provide them with a decisive advantage in the midst of a group in which, as the *Freeman's Journal* put it, "scarcely a young working man of the town but has some military training in the regular or militia troops and artillery".\(^{91}\)

By the end of October the size of the Midland Volunteer Force was estimated at five thousand men.\(^{92}\) Most of these had some military training and, far worse from the I.R.B. point of view, were loyal to the King. The I.R.B.'s plans, however, were aided by two factors: First, the Midland Volunteer Force concentrated on its own development and did not attempt to spread elsewhere in Ireland; and second, the war would mean the call to arms of all the reservists and militiamen in the Force so that it virtually disappeared as an autonomous body. By December 1914 the remnants of the Force joined the Irish National Volunteers.\(^{93}\)

The second Volunteer-type armed force to emerge in the south of Ireland was the Irish Citizen Army. This body emerged out of the labour troubles of 1913; it was virtually confined to Dublin and was a class-oriented body, and as long as Jim Larkin remained in Ireland it emphasized class war as distinct from the war of national liberation which was the

\(^{91}\) 15 October, 1913.


\(^{93}\) Oliver Snoddy, "The Midland Volunteer Force", op. cit., p. 43.
war the I.R.B. was intent on furthering. The Irish Republican Brotherhood would probably have been as hard pressed trying to direct Jim Larkin as any six British army reservists, and the emphasis on class war was likely to repel many of the middle-class romantic nationalists who figured prominently in the I.R.B. as well as disbar them from playing a leading role in that army.

The I.R.B. made its move on the basis of an article written by Eoin MacNeill, a supporter of John Redmond in politics and a well known and popular figure. The article, "The North Began", was published in An Claidheamh Soluis in November 1913 and was devoted largely to praising the Ulster Volunteer Movement on the grounds that its creation was in fact a move towards Home Rule. Ulster had shown the way and had demonstrated the unwillingness of the British Government to suppress such movements in Ireland. This article was one of a number of such articles published in Ireland at this time, and Patrick Pearse for one was far more militant in the pages of Irish Freedom than MacNeill; but MacNeill was a far more prominent figure nationally than Pearse and was known as a moderate Home Ruler. His activities in the Gaelic League had made him well known to many in the I.R.B. who were aware of his ideas and of his limitations. Bulmer Hobson appears to have decided that MacNeill's article was to be followed up and that MacNeill should be approached and supported in carrying forward his idea that it was possible for
Volunteers to organize throughout Ireland. He was thus encouraged to take charge of the formation of a body of nationalist Volunteers. 94 MacNeill agreed and a provisional committee of thirty was set up to organize the Irish Volunteers. Initially the announced plan of the provisional committee was simply to get the Volunteers under way. As soon as the regiments were set up, they would become self-governing and elect a central committee. 95 The original provisional committee was set up to convey the impression of being a Redmondite body with a few known extremists in its ranks such as Bulmer Hobson. Bulmer Hobson was considered as a dangerous extremist at this time, and he relates that Patrick Pearse warned Eoin MacNeill against allowing the movement to fall under the control of men like him. 96 This is difficult to reconcile with Pearse's writing at this time that:

A thing that stands demonstrable is that nationhood is not achieved otherwise than in arms: in one or two instances there may have been no actual bloodshed, but the arms were there and the ability to use them. Ireland unarmed will attain just as much freedom as it is convenient for England to give her; Ireland armed will attain just as much freedom as she wants. 97

Pearse may in fact have been warning MacNeill against well-
known extremists rather than simply extremists as such.

In any case the provisional committee eventually was brought up to strength, and as Piaras Beaslai revealed in a discussion of the original provisional committee:

Ultimately we had a membership of thirty - and later twenty-nine when Lonergan (one of the I.R.B. drill instructors) left for the United States.

Of these, no fewer than sixteen were members of the I.R.B., a fact, of course unknown to the others, and probably unsuspected by most of them.\(^98\)

Hobson's policy of drilling I.R.B. men accounts in large measure for this majority on the Provisional Committee as well as among the officers of the new force; I.R.B. men immediately stood out as suitable leaders and instructors for a paramilitary organization. The participation of Redmondites in the setting up of the Irish Volunteers represented a growing impatience and intransigence on their part. They were growing restive under the static political situation forced upon the Irish Parliamentary Party by the Lords' veto and felt challenged by the activities of the Ulster unionists, but it did not represent a rebellion against John Redmond's leadership. Desmond FitzGerald recorded his impression of the mood of the time. He wrote:

I imagine that when 1913 was reached the position was that Griffith had a smallish minority (mostly young men) who were enthusiastic followers, while a fairly large number of the people who supported

Mr. Redmond's Party were inclined to be critical and possibly cynical. If Home Rule came quickly, well and good. No doubt it could be used beneficially as a point from which we could evolve nationally. But if it did not come soon, then it would be time to try something else.99

At this time John Redmond was still confidently asserting that "no power on earth" could prevent the Home Rule Bill from passing into law.100

Plans went ahead to hold an inaugural meeting to launch the Irish Volunteers on the 25 November 1913. At this time the project met with neither encouragement nor open opposition from the Irish Party. The Party at Westminster was sustained by the slow but relentless progress of the Home Rule Bill through the parliamentary maze; this may have made its leaders oblivious of the attraction which the Volunteer movement was likely to exert on supporters in Ireland longing to do something in response to the provocation of Ulster Volunteer activity and hasten the Bill's progress. They felt a need to counteract the Ulster propaganda while at the same time relieving their own feelings of frustration.101 The Irish Republican Brotherhood was careful not to reveal its full involvement, and on the Sunday before the inaugural meeting of the Volunteers, Sean MacDermott, addressing a crowd at the Cork Manchester Martyrs Commemoration, described the impending Home Rule measure as "a great thing for the country"

100 Irish Weekly Independent, 22 November, 1913.
101 See Memoirs of Desmond FitzGerald, op. cit., p. 28.
though his main message was a glorification of the Fenian tradition.102

The inaugural meeting of the Volunteers held in the Rotunda rink was an enormously successful affair in spite of some disruption caused by members of The Irish Transport and General Workers' Union who objected to the fact that some of the members of the Provisional Committee were involved in the lock-out then in force against the union. On the whole, however, the people of Dublin responded to what J. J. Horgan described as the "fundamental idea" behind the success of the Volunteer movement - "To ensure that Carson's illegal threats should not destroy Redmond's work"103 - and joined up in large numbers at the conclusion of the meeting. The Manifesto which was read at the meeting made quite plain the anti-unionist character of the new movement:

The party which has thus substituted open force for the semblance of civil government is seeking by this means, not merely to decide an immediate political issue of great concern to this nation but also to obtain for itself the future control of all our National affairs. It is plain to every man that the people of Ireland, if they acquiesce in this new policy, by their inaction, will consent to the surrender, not only of their rights as a nation, but of their civic rights as men.104

The objective proposed for the Volunteers in the Manifesto, falls far short of that which I.R.B. had in mind:

102Cork Examiner, 24 November, 1913.
103Parnell to Pearse, op. cit., p. 232.
104Cork Examiner, 26 November, 1913.
The object proposed for the Irish Volunteers is to secure and maintain the rights and liberties common to all the people of Ireland. Their duties will be defensive and protective, and they will not contemplate either aggression or domination.105

Mention was also made of the need for district sections to elect a new committee in the near future to replace the Provisional Committee. Neither of these provisions fitted into I.R.B. plans envisaging a separatist object for the Volunteers, and while they succeeded in getting a large number of I.R.B. men appointed as officers in the Volunteers, a freely elected committee at this time would have been far more Redmondite in complexion than the Provisional Committee. 106 The I.R.B. was forced to bide its time, but it was fortunate later on in that it was enabled to avoid the onus of resisting the democratization of the movement by John Redmond's takeover the following year.

A few days after the formation of the Irish Volunteers, the British Government prohibited the importation of arms into Ireland under the Customs Act of 1876. In Dublin this was interpreted by many as being directed at the Irish Volunteers.107 In Cork where there were as yet no Volunteers, the move was dismissed by the Cork Examiner as "attaching too much importance to the excellent fooling indulged in by Sir Edward Carson". 108 One student of the period has commented

105 Ibid.
107 Freeman's Journal, 6 December, 1913.
on the theory that the ban was directed at the Irish Volunteers, pointing out that:

If you prod the theory a bit, though, it does not stand up all that well. Asquith had little to gain from forarming the Tory army which was ranting about overthrowing him. Common sense says the British were more anxious to prevent armed clashes between rival groups in Ireland.109

In fact the main opposition to the Irish Volunteers in 1913 was to come not from the British but from the Irish Parliamentary Party and from the Ancient Order of Hibernians. When the Volunteers were inaugurated in Cork in mid-December, the project was opposed by the Hibernians and very little public enthusiasm was manifested.110

Youth, which found little outlet for its energies in the organs of the Irish Parliamentary Party, was attracted and corps were formed in the University Colleges. In Galway, students voted 71 to 19 in favour of the setting up of a Volunteer Corps; 16 of the 19 opponents of the scheme opted in favour of the British army affiliated officer training corps.111 The Redmondite reaction against the Volunteers began in mid-December. On 17 December the Cork Examiner commented in a leading article that:

The movement may and possibly was inaugurated with the most honest and patriotic motives, but there can be no mistake about the fact that as far as our national aspirations are bound up in the magnificent

111 Cork Examiner, 6 December, 1913.
and successful struggle the Irish Parliamentary Party are making to encompass Irish self-government, the project cannot possibly be a help, while it is almost equally certain that it will be mischievous and embarrassing.

On 18 December the *Freeman's Journal* published a letter from Richard Hazleton, an Irish Parliamentary Party Member of Parliament, in which he argued that:

The truth seems to be that such vitality as this movement possesses is due to a general feeling that, in the event of the present Home Rule settlement not being carried through, the Irish people will be compelled to take steps to try and make the Government of this country by England impossible. I rejoice that such a feeling is widespread. It indicates that, if necessary, our people will be prepared to assert themselves. But at this critical stage in the fortunes of our country to plunge into a movement of this ill-conceived and muddle-headed character would be not only to imperil the Home Rule position, but to mortgage the whole future of Ireland.

The following day the same newspaper carried Eoin MacNeill's reply to the mounting criticism of the Volunteers and he pointed out that:

While many Nationalists doubt, and not a few disapprove, of the policy of the Irish Volunteer movement, it is certain that a very large number have given the movement a spontaneous and cordial approval. The vast majority of these are, as I am, supporters of the Home Rule movement under Mr. John Redmond, and are confident that the Irish Volunteer movement, far from embarrassing, will greatly strengthen the Home Rule cause ...

In this controversy Richard Hazleton was probably correct in his assessment of the effect of the Volunteer movement on the Home Rule cause. The British Government had a strong moral obligation towards the Irish Parliamentary Party, which was behaving with constitutional propriety while the
Ulster unionists were openly resorting to unconstitutional and illegal methods. Moral obligation is not the most valuable coin of politics, but in this case it was reinforced by a party commitment going back to Gladstone and by purely political obligations incurred over the Lloyd George budget and the Parliament Act of 1911. The emergence of Volunteers in the south of Ireland changed the character of the obligation and placed the Government in a position where it could not ignore the possibility of war between rival private armies in Ireland. Augustine Birrell, the Chief Secretary for Ireland, who was one of the Cabinet Ministers most sympathetic to Home Rule, was not without understanding of the plight of Ulster unionists, as his remarks in a letter to the Prime Minister written in 1913 indicate. Belfast, he said:

... is really a great Protestant effort, with Town Hall as fine as Glasgow or Manchester and shrewd, level-headed businessmen managing its affairs, you realize what a thing you are asking these conceited unimaginative Protestant citizens to do, when you expected them to throw in their lot with such a place as Dublin.112

Birrell never gave up his Home Rule commitment, but many others whose sympathies with Home Rule were at best lukewarm were given by the creation of the Irish Volunteers an excuse for weakening their commitment even further. Civil servants and military officers became more openly partizan and began to have doubts about their duty to enforce Home

Rule at least on Ulster. One of the men involved in the formation of the Ulster Volunteer Force has given an account of sentiments which were widespread among members of the U.V.F. and which were bound to strike responsive chords in the minds of British public servants, civil, military and elected.

The U.V.F. was, in our judgment on the King's service - in support of the Empire - as much and even more than the army which we considered (as did its members) was being wrongfully used by an unscrupulous government to disintegrate the King's realm.\textsuperscript{113}

A loudly professed loyalty to the Crown was a major determinant of the conciliatory attitude towards Ulster which was becoming more widespread in 1913. Sir West Ridgway referred to earlier demonstrations of loyalty when he wrote this time:

Those who, like myself, took part in the administration of Ireland during the stormy years of Mr. Balfour's Secretaryship vividly remember how, when the rest of Ireland was in a condition of scarcely veiled rebellion, Ulster stood by us, and we cannot forget that to the sympathy and loyalty of Ulster we were greatly indebted for our success in enforcing law and order. Although we now fully realize that the Nationalist leaders - as in the case of most Irishmen when angry - said many wild things which like Sir Edward Carson and his friends they did not mean, nevertheless we should remember how these words exasperated the native hostility of the Ulster Protestants and left angry and suspicious impressions which can only be removed by the effacing finger of time. Therefore we feel that it is vain to ask them to submit to the rule of the men whom they mistrust so greatly, until Mr. Redmond and his colleagues have won them over by showing that they can and will rule Ireland efficiently and impartially.\textsuperscript{114}

\textsuperscript{113}Brigadier-General F. P. Crozier, Ireland for Ever (Cedric Chivers Ltd., Bath, 1971), p. 46.

The boycotting of Protestant merchants in the south because they had been critical of Home Rule only hardened the Ulster resistance.\textsuperscript{115} This kind of activity was on a very small scale when compared with the intimidation of Roman Catholics in Belfast; but for people looking for a way out of an embarrassing commitment to Home Rule, it provided a useful argument, and it did undermine the Irish Party's professions of impartiality towards all creeds. The emergence of the Irish Volunteers confirmed British prejudices about the unreliability of the Irish and decreased the strength of the moral obligation felt towards southern Nationalists. One of the senior British civil servants in Ireland has recorded his sentiments in the light of the political developments of 1913:

\begin{quote}
I was beginning to have doubts of the views which I had always held as to the duty of a civil servant, that it was my duty to obey the orders of whatever government was in power, expressed through my political chief. Did that duty hold good in Ireland if, instead of obedience to one of two parties, both owing allegiance to the King whose servant I was, one party's ultimate aim was to throw off that allegiance? I had read, as I have said a good deal of Irish history, not only that provided by English writers, but books such as Mitchel's Jail Journal, which showed that the Nationalist sentiment was not the ordinary play of 'politics' but an attitude of definite rebellion against the Crown. Every week I read in the Sinn Fein papers this sentiment, defined and glorified in hatred and contumely, embellished by what I knew to be false history, against the King's Government whatever party was in power.
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{115} W. Alison Phillips: The Revolution in Ireland 1906 - 1923, op. cit., p. 70.
I found it difficult to blame the Ulster people, who knew that the extremists in Ireland would only use the Home Rule Bill as a stepping stone to separatism and the dismemberment of the King's Dominions, for resisting that bill, when the Liberal Government, with their small composite majority in the House of Commons, persisted in forcing it through.\textsuperscript{116}

From the point of view of Home Rulers the creation of the Irish Volunteers was a serious blow as Richard Hazleton had perceived. It set up in Ireland a disciplined active body which was beyond the direct control of the Irish Parliamentary Party, which included among its leaders men who were known to be extreme Republicans whose influence was also being felt and ineffectually resisted in the Gaelic League. As Oliver MacDonagh has pointed out, the formation of the Irish Volunteers "signalized a fatal weakening of Redmond's authority".\textsuperscript{117} The creation of the Ulster Volunteer Force had undermined constitutionalism and demonstrated an unwillingness to abide by decisions reached in Parliament, and the creation of the Irish Volunteers continued that process.\textsuperscript{118} The existence of the Irish Volunteers seriously impeded John Redmond's attempt to activate the Liberal Government's commitment to Home Rule through an appeal to conscience. The Irish Parliamentary Party had no other strategy readily available. The strategy of inducement worked through institutional channels had brought victory


\textsuperscript{117} Ireland, op. cit., p. 60.

\textsuperscript{118} See Norman Cantor, \textit{The Age of Protest: Dissent and Rebellion in the Twentieth Century}, op. cit., p. 32.
so close that the Irish Party was not prepared to shift to a strategy of attempted coercion which had failed so often in the past and which it had lately been denouncing in the strongest possible terms when used by the Ulster unionists.119

From the point of view of the extremists the foundation of the Irish Volunteers had a number of advantages and the fact that it reduced drastically the chance of Home Rule being imposed upon Ulster was not perceived at the time. One of the most obvious advantages of the Irish Volunteers was that it gave the extremists control over a popular organization which was an ideal 'cover' for militant operations. The Irish Republican Brotherhood's enthusiasm was such that it held one of its extremely rare "general meetings" to urge its members to support and cooperate in the formation of the Irish Volunteers.120 The separatists saw in the Volunteers the embryo of an army which would be able to challenge British rule in Ireland.121 While the majority of those who joined the Volunteers had no notion of doing any more than offsetting the Ulster Unionist pressure and taking some active steps to promote Home Rule and to alleviate some of their frustrations; the Irish Volunteers, officered largely


121 M. O Dubhghaill, Insurrection Fires at Eastertide, op. cit., p. 119.
by Bulmer Hobson's trained men, would prove an invaluable propaganda machine. The frustrated, passively alienated lukewarm supporters of John Redmond were exposed to new dreams based on the myths made current by the Gaelic League, but now with an instrument which made these dreams more immediate and more plausible than they had been since the Fenian days. The immediate success of the movement indicated an increasing level of systemic frustration on the part of many loyal supporters of the Irish Parliamentary Party who found the long delay in the implementation of Home Rule and the Ulster threat psychologically difficult to bear. The palpable loss of enthusiasm for Home Rule among members of the Government in late 1913, which owed something to the rise of the Volunteers, merely spread disillusionment, alienation and frustration more widely still, thus leading to higher enrollment in the Volunteers and to an increased potential for violence.\textsuperscript{122} Eoin MacNeill himself declared that the crucial factor leading to the creation of a Volunteer force in the south of Ireland was the example given by Sir Edward Carson.\textsuperscript{123} Thus Sir Edward Carson was in effect responsible for the existence of a militant mass movement which the I.R.B. leadership had been unable to create on its own. As Eric Hoffer observed:

\textsuperscript{122}For an account of this kind of circular process see Leonard Berkowitz: "The Study of Urban Violence" in James Chowning Davies, ed., \textit{When Men Revolt and Why}, op. cit., p. 185. \\
No matter how vital we think the role of leadership in the rise of a mass movement, there is no doubt that the leader cannot create the conditions which make the rise of a movement possible. He cannot conjure a movement out of a void. There has to be an eagerness to follow and obey, and an intense dissatisfaction with things as they are, before movement and leader can make their appearance. 124

There were other people in Ireland besides the middle-class intelligentsia who were characterized as a group by alienation and subject to severe deprivation, the perception of which became more acute in 1913. These were the unskilled workers, particularly of Dublin. In Belfast the working class was comparatively prosperous and predominantly skilled. By 1913 it was achieving parity with the working class of England, and through the Ulster Volunteer Force it was being politicized into the anti-Home Rule camp. The anti-Home Rule agitation involved a truce in the class war for Protestant workers. The largely unskilled working class of Dublin was ignored by the Irish Parliamentary Party and was politically unrepresented and powerless. In 1913 they were led by a man who was determined to relieve the relative deprivation of unskilled labour and to make the Irish working class a significant factor in a Home Rule Ireland. Neither of these goals had as much relevance for the Ulster workers as they did for the south of Ireland. There were a number of strikes in Dublin early in 1913, the longest of which was that of the Quay Porters of the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company which lasted until the

latter part of April, and there was also fairly serious disruption caused by strikes in Limerick. In early March a leading article in the *Freeman's Journal* referred to the labour unrest and supported the strikers, commenting that: "The poor are clamouring not for doles but for justice, and they will neither be denied nor kept down". The position of the unskilled workers of Ireland was aggravated by a slowdown in emigration due to limited opportunities, particularly in the United States, South Africa and Argentina.

During the strike and lock-out later in the year James Connolly analyzed the situation of labour in Dublin. He discussed some peculiarities of Irish public opinion, one of which was that "in Ireland everything connected with the question of poverty insensibly became identified with one side or the other in the political fight over the question of national government". It was to that factor that he attributed the lack of championship of the downtrodden workers on the part of the intelligentsia, leading in turn to the emergence of a peculiar Dublin public opinion which "gradually came to believe that poverty and its attendant miseries in a

125 *Freeman's Journal*, 31 January and 21 April, 1913.
126 *Irish Weekly Independent*, 8 February, 1913.
127 10 March, 1913.
city where things outside of public interest, and not in the remotest degree connected with public duties, or civic patriotism". This accounted for the shock when a working class agitator came upon the Dublin labour scene. The function which Connolly attributed to the agitator was the exposure of the relative deprivation characteristic of Dublin workers. The agitator brought out the fact that wages were lower and rents higher in Dublin than in England, that the Dublin worker had always been expected to fight in the national struggle while no one ever thought of helping him in his struggle for a decent life, and that the universal rationalization that Irish industries had to struggle against wealthy English firms which was used to justify relative deprivation was usually a sham. As another commentator has noted:

On one side, in 1913, were workers badly paid, without security, living under conditions that created a temper of revolt, and on the other side were employers who made no attempt to modernize their business, and whose idea of meeting competition, as James Connolly was to tell them, was to keep available a pool of cheap and competitive labour. In such conditions conflict was latent.

Perhaps most revealing in the light of James Connolly's subsequent career was the second point which the working class agitator presented to the Irish workers:

It was further insisted that as the Irish farmers had only succeeded in breaking the back of Irish

130 Ibid., p. 387.
landlordism by creating a public opinion which made allegiance to the farmers synonymous with allegiance to Ireland, which treated as a traitor to Ireland all those who acted against the interests of the farmers, so the Irish Working Class could in its turn only emancipate itself by acting resolutely upon the principle that the cause of labour was the cause of Ireland, and that they who sought to perpetuate the enslavement and degradation of labour were the enemies of Ireland, and hence part and parcel of the system of oppression. That the conquest of Ireland had meant social and political servitude of the Irish masses, and therefore the reconquest of Ireland must mean the social as well as the political independence from servitude of every man, woman and child in Ireland. In other words, the common ownership of all Ireland by all the Irish.132

Independently of his personal convictions in the matter, James Connolly could perceive tactical reasons for pushing the Irish working class towards a more nationalistic stance as an element in the class struggle.

The labour troubles of 1913, though eventually involving almost every firm in Dublin and practically the entire working class of the city, centred on the relationship between William Martin Murphy and Jim Larkin. William Martin Murphy was one of Dublin's most prominent and powerful businessmen, owning the Dublin United Tramway Company, the Independent newspaper group, one of Dublin's large hotels and a large department store. Jim Larkin was the founder of the Irish Transport and General Worker's Union, the major union representing unskilled labour in Ireland. The Tramway Company was subject to some resentment in Dublin at this

132 "Labour in Dublin", op. cit., p. 388.
time primarily because among the larger cities in the United Kingdom it provided the least travel for the passenger's fare. In Dublin 1d. purchased only 1 1/2 miles of travel, whereas in London the same sum purchased 5 miles of travel, in Belfast 4 1/2 miles, in Bradford 4 miles, in Leeds 4 miles, etc. These high fares meant not only high profits but also contributed to the horror of the Dublin slums by forcing workers to live in the centre of the city rather than move out to the less crowded and more salubrious suburbs.

The major labour battle in Irish history did not open up on a financial question as such, though the realization that the Tramway Company was gouging the masses may have influenced Jim Larkin's attitude. The clash, however, came over the attempt by the I.T.G.W.U. to organize the Tramway Company's employees. The Union had been very active and successful in the preceding few years and was engaged in organizing Dublin's exceptionally large population of unskilled workers. This was a difficult task and resort to force had occurred on both sides. The Union used intimidation to bring non-unionized workers into line and in attempts to prevent the importation of 'blackleg' labour from England. Jim Larkin also tended to make wider use of 'sympathetic' strikes than most other union leaders. The employers relied on private guards and on the police to prevent damage to their property and to provide protection for 'blacklegs'. They were shortly to use

_Freeman's Journal, 5 July, 1913._
the 'sympathetic' lock-out as a defence against the sympathetic strike. William Martin Murphy had made his dislike of Jim Larkin, his tactics and his union, perfectly clear. By mid 1913 Larkin's endeavours to unionize the unskilled had been remarkably successful, and the membership of his union had grown from 4,000 in 1911 to 10,000. In 1912 Larkin had managed the singular feat of organizing the agricultural labourers from the Dublin area and the I.T.G.W.U. controlled the port of Dublin. To many of the employers it seemed necessary to cut Larkin down to size before Home Rule became a fact. As one of Connolly's biographers put it:

The employers had political reasons for trying conclusions with Larkin. Not only had he stirred up those who carried the whole of Dublin society on their backs. His organization had infused a spirit into both Trades Council and T.U.C., and the political outcome was a Labour Party. They were expecting Home Rule, and whether it was to be "Rome Rule" or not, they intended to be the beneficiaries. He had disturbed their dream of an Ireland safely insulated from the "profane class struggle of the sinful world". Self-government was being conferred only to be snatched away on the one hand by Carson, on the other by the resurgent mob. The dream became a nightmare...

The political motivation of the lock-out which followed has received little attention, but helps to explain the extraordinary implacability of the employers. After Home Rule, whose rule?

There was an additional factor that as long as the confrontation occurred before Home Rule, any resentment generated by recourse to police action was likely to be diverted from the Irish employers to the British Government.

134 Emmet Larkin, James Larkin, op. cit., p. 98.
Larkin had first attempted to organize the Tramway workers in 1911 - a troubled year in labour relations all over the United Kingdom and the year in which the Dublin employers had banded together in a federation. Murphy and Larkin had been sniping at each other through their respective newspapers ever since. Murphy had attempted to protect himself from a renewed attack by dismissing from the employ of the Dublin United Tramway Company any employee known to sympathize with Larkin, thus preventing the infiltration and subversion of his work force. He had not been entirely successful, and Larkin, fresh from his success with the agricultural workers, felt confident enough to mount a direct attack on Murphy's defences. The Irish Transport and General Workers' Union men who had retained their employment with the Tramway Company began the attack in mid-August with a wage demand for an increase of 2s 6d per week. The Company initially offered 1s.\textsuperscript{136} The following day, having ascertained that the demand originated with Larkin's men, the directors of the Tramway Company published a notice in the Dublin newspapers:

\begin{quote}
It has come to the knowledge of the directors that demands prepared by Mr. James Larkin are to be sent to the Board by some of the traffic employers, under the pretence that they are coming from the body of the men. As no consideration will be given to any communication coming from Mr. Larkin or his Union, his agents might save themselves the trouble of sending them.\textsuperscript{137}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{136} \textit{Freeman's Journal}, 13 August, 1913.

\textsuperscript{137} Ibid., 14 August, 1913.
The gloves were off and the initial advantage seemed to lie with the Union, as the fight was apparently to be on the Company's refusal to recognize the Union's right to represent its employees rather than on the issue of wages. The right of employees to determine their own union was recognized as a fundamental principle of trade unionism by 1913. The Company quickly arranged the setting up of a company union and two supporters of Larkin on the Dublin Corporation, Councillor Partridge and Alderman McWalter, called for an examination of the possibility of a municipal takeover of the Tramway Company.\textsuperscript{138} The Tramway Company then began to hire new employees in anticipation of a strike by those of its old employees who were members of the I.T.G.W.U. and it required these new employees to sign a statement that they were not members of that union and that they undertook not to become members of it.

By the end of the week the threat of a Tramway strike was very much present. The parcel delivery service of the Tramway Company was discontinued, most employees being "temporarily suspended". Many of the newsboys who distributed The Irish Independent were recruited into the Union, and on Thursday, 21 August there was a simultaneous strike and lock-out at the newspaper office. Many of the newsboys were members of the Fianna, and this provided a link between

\textsuperscript{138}Ibid., 19 August, 1913.
the extreme Republicans and the strikers. Eason & Son continued to distribute the Independent newspapers and Larkin called a strike against that firm and made use of the "tainted goods" device whereby dockers refused to handle goods destined for Eason and Son. These were merely skirmishes, however, and the real battle was joined the following week, Horse Show week. The two major protagonists had no very good opinion of each other. The Irish Worker had referred to William Martin Murphy as:

The most foul and vicious blackguard that ever polluted any country ... whose career has been one long series of degrading and destroying the characters of men who he was and is not fit to be a doormat for - a creature who is living on the sweated victims who are compelled to slave for this modern capitalistic vampire.

Martin's language was more moderate but the feelings it expressed were much the same when in August, he defended his actions:

Larkin is violently endeavouring to show that my action is against the principle of trade unionism. It is nothing of the kind. My fight is with Larkinism, the most pestilential 'ism' that any community could be afflicted with. The so-called Transport Union is not a union at all. It is merely a rabble commanded by Larkin who is the greatest enemy of trades unionism.

Murphy confidently asserted that he would break the Transport Union, and Larkin replied with equal confidence that he would

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139 See C. Desmond Greaves: Liam Mellows and The Irish Revolution, op. cit., p. 52.
140 Freeman's Journal, 22 August, 1913.
141 15 February, 1913.
142 Irish Weekly Independent, 30 August, 1913.
not; but Larkin also significantly shifted his sights when he said:

I am in this fight because it was ordained that I should meet William Martin Murphy. He has dismissed competent servants because they are members of the Union. If he is going to starve men, by what authority have the government promised to support him? The Earl of Aberdeen is incurring a grave responsibility in giving the forces of the Crown. 143

On the Tuesday of Horse Show Week, 26 August, the battle began in earnest. Those Tramway men who belonged to the I.T.G.W.U. struck against the Company. The attack was calculated to be felt by Dublin society in the midst of one of its most sacred annual festivals, the Dublin Horse Show. The Union, however, only controlled a minority of the drivers, seven hundred out of seventeen hundred, 144 and in less than one hour after the onset of the strike a slightly reduced service was resumed. 145 The following day five leaders of the Union including Jim Larkin were arrested and charged with seditious libel and seditious conspiracy -

... in agreeing and acting together for the criminal purpose of holding a meeting for the purpose of disturbing the public peace, and raising discontent and disaffection amongst His Majesty's subjects, the citizens of Dublin; and discontent and hatred between certain classes of His Majesty's subjects, to with the working classes of Dublin and the police forces of the Crown, and the soldiers of the Crown; and for the purpose of exciting hatred and contempt of the Government, and for the purpose of inciting to murder. 146

143 Freeman's Journal, 25 August, 1913.
144 Emmet Larkin, James Larkin, op. cit., p. 108.
145 Freeman's Journal, 27 August, 1913.
146 Cork Examiner, 28 August, 1913.
The five labour leaders were released on bail with an undertaking not to use inflammatory language or attend illegal meetings, an undertaking which Larkin interpreted very liberally indeed the next evening at a meeting where he burned a proclamation prohibiting a meeting he was to address in Sackville Street on Sunday. His remarks while doing this could easily have been interpreted as threats upon the King himself.147

Larkin's arrest resulted in some protests being made to the Irish administration. One of these protests to reach Augustine Birrell was a telegram from the British Socialist Party which read:

British Socialist Party strongly protests against the Government taking the side of the employers in the present trade dispute in Dublin by the unjust prosecution of James Larkin and others, particularly when Carson and confederates are permitted to advise armed revolt in Ulster. Your action clearly shows that the Government fear the reasonable demands of the working class far more than any middle-class political uprising.148

Violence and the threat of violence was being encouraged by the supineness of the Government, backed by the Irish Parliamentary Party, in dealing with the Ulster Volunteer Force. The Irish Citizen Army, The Irish Volunteers and the use of violent language and threats were all given an impetus by this official attitude. The Government, however,

147 See Emmet Larkin, James Larkin, op. cit., p. 111.
148 Cork Examiner, 30 August, 1913.
at this time might have been justified in fearing violence in Dublin more than in Ulster, since in September the insurance rate for risk of damage to property through riot and civil disturbance was one percent in Dublin and only half of one percent in Belfast.\textsuperscript{149}

The most famous event connected with the labour troubles of 1913 was the Sackville Street meeting and baton charge on Sunday, 31 August 1913. The event needs no extensive retelling but over four hundred civilians and forty-five policemen were injured and there is little doubt, on the basis of numerous contemporary accounts as well as from photographs taken immediately before and during the baton charge, that the police were over-reacting. The police had been under severe provocation for some days prior to that Sunday, and the large number of civilian casualties is partly attributable to a misunderstanding.\textsuperscript{150} The Royal Irish Constabulary had been drafted into Dublin to assist the Dublin Metropolitan Police, and the morale of that force was then at a low point because of grievances over pay which had not been increased in thirty years while industrial wages (as well as farm income) had markedly risen, particularly in the north.\textsuperscript{151} From the point

\textsuperscript{149}Freeman’s Journal, 6 September, 1913.

\textsuperscript{150}On the provocation to which the police had been subjected, particularly on the previous day and night, see Emmet Larkin, James Larkin, op. cit., p. 113 and Sean O’Faolain, Constance Markievicz, op. cit., p. 115.

\textsuperscript{151}Freeman’s Journal, 1 October, 1913. One result of this which would be important later was that a higher than ever proportion of the R.I.C. was made up of Roman Catholics from the South of Ireland.
of view of reinforcing tendencies to violence the significance of the police charge in Sackville Street lies in its effect on public opinion and on working class opinion in particular. Larkin had strongly condemned the use of police to serve the interests of the employers; and while there was no doubt that the police would have become involved in protecting the lives of non-striking workers and "scabs" or even in the maintenance of vital services, they had been used to keep Eason's delivery vans running and now they had charged a crowd made up in part of people emerging from church: This had a clearly adverse effect on public support for the police.

One of the major effects of 'Bloody Sunday' was a drawing together of unionized labour. The unions representing skilled tradesmen came out in support of the strikers, but in so doing the shift from hostility to the employers to hostility to the police and to the Government became more pronounced. This shift in turn led to support from some members of the separatist fringe denouncing police brutality.

Tom Clarke, the old Fenian denounced the police bludgeonings in O'Connell St. with fierce passion. Padraig Pearse wrote of the rotten tenement buildings which every now and then collapsed, of the hunger of the people, and the brutality of the police. Thomas MacDonagh and Joseph Plunkett threw open the columns of their Irish Review for Connolly to state the Labour case.152

Though it must be pointed out that the Irish Review also provided Professor T. M. Kettle with an opportunity to defend the employers against the charges levelled at them in A.E.'s

famous letter to the *Irish Times*.\textsuperscript{153} Patrick Pearse blamed all the poverty and misery in Ireland on English domination and rejected the socialist assumption of class war.\textsuperscript{154} What he viewed with favour in socialism was its potential for violence.\textsuperscript{155} Desmond Ryan reports a conversation with Pearse at this time in which Pearse said that "If the workers will have strikes, I agree that their strikes should be thorough and terrible".\textsuperscript{156} Pearse was ready to welcome violence as "cleansing and sanctifying" regardless of its source, and Tom Clarke welcomed any occasion which placed the police or any other government institution in an unfavourable position. Thomas MacDonagh, on the other hand, appears to have been sympathetic with the strikers from the outset.\textsuperscript{157} He witnessed the Sunday baton charge and later appeared to testify before the Vice-Regal Commission which was set up to enquire into the Dublin disturbances associated with the labour troubles. Most people in Dublin, other than avowed supporters of the Government and police, chose to ignore the Commission on the grounds that its composition made it unlikely that its report would be anything but a complete


\textsuperscript{154} Political Writings and Speeches, op. cit., p. 180.

\textsuperscript{155} Ibid., pp. 184 - 185.

\textsuperscript{156} The Man Called Pearse (Maunsel and Roberts, Ltd., Dublin, 1923), p. 111.

whitewash of the police, though by not testifying they may have ensured that result. Thomas MacDonagh was one of the two hundred and eighty-one witnesses heard by the Commission. Only seventy-nine of these were civilians, and the vast majority of those testified in favour of the police. MacDonagh was skillfully cross-questioned and the experience could only have been humiliating.\(^{158}\)

Following the Sunday riots and the funerals of victims of police batons on the previous night, the atmosphere of Dublin became more tense still as more employers joined the lock-out.\(^{159}\) The Dublin Corporation met and approved a resolution calling for an enquiry into the conduct of the police and one interesting feature of that meeting was that all sides agreed in blaming Dublin Castle for whatever they conceived as being the cause of the riots. What seemed weakness to the unionists was brutality in the eyes of nationalists.\(^{160}\) The employers' antipathy towards the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union did not diminish, and the Dublin Chamber of Commerce voted its thanks to William Martin Murphy "for the attitude he has taken in the present labour troubles".\(^{161}\) A few days later the Employers'  


\(^{159}\) Freeman's Journal, 2 September, 1913.  

\(^{160}\) Ibid.  

\(^{161}\) Ibid.
Federation approved a general lock-out of all men belonging to the I.T.G.W.U. in response to the use of sympathy strikes.162 The Roman Catholic Church at this time intensified its fight against socialism and attacked Larkin more explicitly. Father F. W. O'Loughlin, who in August had attacked socialism in an address to the Men's Confraternity of the Holy Family, Rathmines, 163 scheduled a series of talks against socialism and Larkinism. 164 Father John Condon, o.s.a., in mid-September described Larkin as unfit to lead Christian workers. 165 The Irish Parliamentary Party largely ignored the Dublin labour dispute and no reference to it was made at Home Rule meetings, even one such as was held in Midleton on 7 September, where the music was provided by the Cork Workingmen's Brass and Reed Prize Band. 166

Meanwhile some attempts were being made to reach a settlement of the dispute, and the British labour movement sent over a delegation to meet the employers and try to work out an agreement. 167 These meetings referred to by the press as the Shelburne Hotel Conference were inconclusive and more lock-outs were declared almost daily, yet speakers at Home

162 *Cork Examiner*, 7 September, 1913.
164 Ibid., 27 September, 1913.
165 *Freeman's Journal*, 18 September, 1913.
166 Ibid., 8 September, 1913.
167 Ibid.
Rule rallies continued to avoid all reference to the situation. Jacobs reopened with non-union labour and the number of 'blacklegs' grew, increasing frustration and leading to further violent reactions such as the attack on Mrs. Hanna Flood's public house in Finglas because she had served non-strikers. At this stage Larkin went to England to solicit support for the Dublin strikers, and he made his famous speech in Manchester where he announced that he had a divine mission to make men and women discontented. Larkin obtained considerable sympathy and support from the British labour movement though James Sexton, the General Secretary of the National Union of Dock Labourers and no friend of Larkin, sharply criticized the impulsive snap strikes typical of unskilled workers' unions. James Connolly, then the Belfast organizer of the I.T.G.W.U., who was in Dublin to help out, particularly while Larkin was expected to be gaoled, defended the use of the sympathetic strike by the I.T.G.W.U. but also suggested a possible remedy to the dispute:

Our position, then, is that the sympathetic strike is but a consequence of the strike, that it is an effect not a cause; that to avoid it the employers must insist upon levelling up all standards of wages and conditions to the best prevailing in each grade, that to do that they must break off relations with all employers who remain below that standard and leave them to be dealt with by the Unions, and

168 Ibid., 10 September and 15 September, 1913.
169 Ibid., 18 September, 1913.
170 Ibid., 16 September, 1913.
171 Ibid., 18 September, 1913.
that they should at once, along with the Trade Unions, form a Conciliation Board, before whom all disputes must be brought (each side pledging themselves to accept the terms agreed upon by a majority of their own side), and then will be laid at once the continual terror of the strike and of its consequences - the sympathetic strike. 172

Connolly returned to Belfast the day on which he had advanced this proposal which proved unacceptable to the employers. On arrival in Belfast he found that his activities in Dublin and the hostile stance taken by Dublin labour towards the Government was unacceptable to Belfast labour. Connolly's train and his party was stoned by members of the Transport and Textile Workers' Union shouting "No Home Rule", "No Pope". 173 Working-class solidarity in Ireland was noticeably inelastic whenever the nerves of Home Rule and Irish nationalism were exposed, and this would contribute to the gradual transformation of southern Irish socialism into what Louis Tréguiz called "une sorte de neo-fenianisme irlandais". 174

By Friday 19 September it was reported that all trade in Dublin was at a standstill as more firms joined the lock-out; by the following Tuesday the number of workers affected was said to have reached 24,000. 175 It has been pointed out that:

At the height of the struggle no less a number than 20,000 wage-earners were directly involved in the city. When the dependents of these wage-earners are calculated

172 Ibid.
173 Ibid.
174 "L'Irlande dans la crise universelle, op. cit., p. 49
see also Erhard Rumpf: Nationalismus und Socialismus in Irland, op. cit., p. 30.
175 Freeman's Journal, 19 September and 23 September, 1913.
it will be found that the struggle affected fully 100,000 men, women and children, and at that time these numbered more than one-third of the whole population of the capital.\textsuperscript{176} Only now did organizations identified with the Irish Parliamentary Party begin to react to the situation in Dublin, and the Mullingar District Council passed a resolution:

That we are very much alarmed at the widespread industrial unrest and disorder existing in our capital city owing to the influence of Larkinism, and think the moment has come for us to declare in no uncertain voice our firm and strong opposition to their destructive influence.

The lone member who tried to argue that Larkin's motives were not evil and that he was trying to help the Irish working class was shouted down with cries of 'atheist' and 'revolutionist'.\textsuperscript{177} A few days later one of the Irish Party's members of parliament, David Sheehy addressed the quarterly meeting of the South Meath Executive of the United Irish League and described Larkin as a "hideous monster" misleading the poor workers.\textsuperscript{178} Larkin responded by attacking the Irish Party for having no sympathy with the workers, and the process of active alienation of the working classes of Dublin from the Irish Parliamentary Party began in earnest.\textsuperscript{179} In the short-run the Irish Party preserved its unity by avoiding

\textsuperscript{176}William O'Brien, "Nineteen-Thirteen - Its Significance" Cathal O'Shannon, ed., \textit{Fifty Years of Liberty Hall}, op. cit., p. 34.

\textsuperscript{177}Freeman's Journal, 19 September, 1913.

\textsuperscript{178}Ibid., 23 September, 1913, The Independent newspaper gave prominent and detailed coverage to this address.

\textsuperscript{179}Ibid., 27 September, 1913.
being dragged into the labour struggle, but in the long-run
this ostrich-like stand weakened the Party's support,
particularly in Dublin, and accounts in part for the success
of the Irish Volunteer Movement in Dublin despite the cool
reception given to the movement by the Party.\textsuperscript{180} The
difficulties of the Irish Parliamentary Party and its in-
ability to take a stand on the issue demonstrated the short-
comings of a single issue party confronted with a problem
not directly related to that issue. The Party failed to
ensure responsiveness, accountability or to be an appropriate
vehicle for peaceful change except on the single issue of
Home Rule.\textsuperscript{181} The fact that one of the most prominent Dublin-
based figures in the Irish Party, John D. Nugent, actively
opposed the workers did nothing to improve relations between
the Party and labour.\textsuperscript{182}

British labour support for the strike began to be stepped
up in late September, and the first of the "food ships"
which would permit the Dublin workers to hold out and avoid
starvation, sailed from Manchester on 26 September.\textsuperscript{183} The
general outlook for a settlement improved with the prospect

\textsuperscript{180} See Denis Gwynne: \textit{The Life of John Redmond}, op. cit.,
p. 241 see also David Kennedy "Ulster Unionism and the
New Nationalism", op. cit., p. 77 and J. J. Horgan, \textit{Parnell
to Pearse}, op. cit., p. 252.

\textsuperscript{181} See A.H. Birch, \textit{Representation} (Macmillan, London, 1972),
pp. 107 ff.


\textsuperscript{183} \textit{Freeman's Journal}, 27 September, 1913.
of a Board of Trade enquiry requested by the Lord Mayor of Dublin and chaired by Sir George Askwith, a man with a considerable reputation as an arbiter in employer/employee disputes. Larkin, however, had made what with hindsight must be accounted a mistake - he had allowed himself to be provoked into attacks on priests by the denunciations of Fathers Condon and O'Loughlin. These attacks made condemnation of Larkin much easier on grounds which were bound to have wide popular appeal, in rural Ireland in particular. Bodies such as the Killeigh Branch of the Land and Labour Leagues and the Sligo County Council unanimously condemned Larkin for his attacks on priests. The Independent newspapers gleefully joined in with these condemnations. The Irish Weekly Independent also referred prominently to the fact that the food ships which were sustaining the workers were British and that Larkin was accepting English charity. It was joined in this condemnation by a prominent Sinn Feiner, John Sweetman, who denounced Larkin for accepting English support in order to destroy the Irish Industrial revival.

What was to become almost an official party line for those Irish Party members who found it necessary to refer to the Dublin situation was advanced by William Redmond in Ennis. In the course of a speech, mostly devoted to the

184 Ibid., 25 September, 1913.
185 Ibid., 1 and 13 October, 1913.
186 Freeman's Journal, 9 October, 1913.
imminent advent of Home Rule, he said that he did not want:

... to say more than one word upon the miserable and horrifying condition of affairs in Dublin, a state of affairs, whoever might be in fault, that was bad enough to wring the heart of any man who loved the old land; but still he would say this much, because he believed it was God's truth, that if they had an Irish Government of their own composed of men belonging to Ireland, living here, representing the Irish people - if they had such a Government he believed that the horrifying scenes that had taken place in Dublin would never have taken place, but that a way out would have been found and a settlement come to.187

A more realistic hope for settlement, that based on Sir George Askwith's enquiry, failed when the employers' federation refused to accept the conditions for a settlement put forward in the report of the enquiry. The report condemned the Union's resort to sympathetic strikes, but the Union had already expressed willingness to desist from resort to that particular weapon. Of greater significance was the report's condemnation as "contrary to individual liberty" of the pledge which employers were insisting that workers sign.188

After considering the report the employers replied defending the pledge as "drastic action to meet an extreme case" and accused the authors of the report of overlooking "that for

187Cork Examiner, 4 October, 1913.

188Irish Weekly Independent, 11 October, 1913; see also Freeman's Journal, 7 October, 1913. The text of the pledge was - "I hereby undertake to carry out all instructions given to me by or on behalf of my employers, and further I agree to immediately resign my membership in the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union (if a member), and I further undertake that I will not join or in any way support this union".
years past the methods of the Irish Transport Union had imposed conditions which are contrary to the individual liberty of both employers and employees". They did, however, offer to make one concession. This was to recognize the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union if it were reorganized and elected new officials "who have met with the approval of the British Joint Labour Board". There was obviously a great difference between relying on the British Joint Labour Board and relying on British food transported by British ships. James Connolly, on behalf of the Union, rejected this offer. The refusal of the employers to enter into discussion with their locked-out employees unless the Union leadership were changed and their refusal to drop the pledge began to turn public opinion towards the Union; and the Freeman's Journal, representative of "respectable" Nationalist opinion, came out in support of the workers.

At the time of this shift in public opinion Jim Larkin took two fateful steps which destroyed this advantage. The first was the attack he launched on the British Labour Party and the second, more crucial in terms of Irish public opinion, was the decision to send some of the working class

189 *Irish Weekly Independent*, 18 October, 1913.
190 *Freeman's Journal*, 16 October, 1913.
191 Ibid., 21 October, 1913.
children, who were threatened with starvation in Dublin, to England where they would be taken in by trade union families for the duration of the strike. Dr. Walsh, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, who had so far been remarkably reticent in the face of the tribulations of his flock, immediately denounced any mother who would permit her children to be sent to England; he declared that "they can be no longer held worthy of the name of Catholic mothers". A great wave of moral outrage swept the ranks of the clergy and of the Roman Catholic bourgeoisie. All sorts of people who were already outraged at Jim Larkin - for being critical of the clergy, for diverting attention away from Home Rule, for threatening middle class control of the anticipated Home Rule Government, for splitting the ranks of Irish nationalism, for interfering with the industrial revival or for any other reason, joined together in a holy crusade against him under the banner of the preservation of the faith held high by the Archbishop of Dublin.

It does appear that Larkin and Mrs. Montefiore had in fact made every attempt possible to ensure that the children would be placed in Irish Roman Catholic homes in England, but their protestations were not listened to by the champions of faith and fatherland. Most children were prevented from leaving Ireland though a few early groups did sail. One group of fifteen left from the North Wall but not before a

193Freeman's Journal, 21 October, 1913.
confrontation with Father O'Doherty. His account revealed the position which was typical of those who stopped the scheme including Maud Gonne who had been counted as a great ally of labour: Father O'Doherty spoke to the children and "asked them if they wanted to become English and Protestant". 194 Few questions can have been better calculated to elicit a negative answer.

Opposition to the scheme was quickly organized, and on the evening of 23 October hand bills were being distributed throughout Dublin asking:

FATHERS AND MOTHERS OF CATHOLIC DUBLIN

Are you content to abandon your children to strangers, who give no guarantee to have them placed in Catholic or Irish homes? You may never see them again! Kidnappers and soupers are at their deadly work. There is no excuse for exiling your children. Provision has been made in Dublin for all cases of distress amongst them. No city has ever been so disgraced. 195

The police, it appears, openly intervened on the side of those trying to prevent children leaving, and Mrs. Montefiore wrote to the newspapers complaining of priests who forced their way into the women's side at the public baths and then physically assaulted the women who were in charge of parties of children. 196 Mrs. Montefiore and Mrs. Rand, one of her collaborators, were arrested and charged with abduction despite the fact that the parents of the children had consented

194 Freeman's Journal, 23 October, 1913.
195 Freeman's Journal, 24 October, 1913.
196 Ibid.
to the scheme.\textsuperscript{197} Towards the end of the month Archbishop Walsh called for the implementation of a scheme to supply the needs of destitute children in Dublin, thus providing a retroactive validation of the earlier handbill.\textsuperscript{198} The Union abandoned the scheme to send away Dublin's starving children, though as late as the first of November an anonymous telegram to Father Hore, the administrator of the Cathedral in Wexford, sent that gentleman at the head of a posse of Hibernians and constables to intercept and search the boat train for a fifteen year old boy allegedly being sent to England.\textsuperscript{199}

Another Roman Catholic prelate to condemn Larkin and the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union at this time was Dr. O'Dwyer, the Bishop of Limerick. At the annual All-Ireland Industrial Conference held in Limerick, he denounced the strikers in terms similar to those of Sinn Fein, arguing that the Union actions were damaging Irish industry.\textsuperscript{200}

Jim Larkin having been sentenced to seven months in gaol, a giant meeting was held in London's Albert Hall to demand his release. George Bernard Shaw and George Russell (AE) made speeches denouncing priests who got involved in politics, the Dublin employers and the Irish Party M.P.'s from that

\textsuperscript{197}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{198}\textit{Freeman's Journal}, 27 October, 1913.
\textsuperscript{199}Ibid., 4 November, 1913.
\textsuperscript{200}\textit{Irish Weekly Independent}, 25 October, 1913.
city. George Russell described the priests as "superhuman beings who cared so little for the body as to say that it would be better for children to starve rather than leave the Christian atmosphere of Dublin" and as "a horde of wild fanatics" who would rend the workers in the name of God.

The six members of Parliament for Dublin were "miserable creatures" and "poltroons". However, it was not mere words but the strategy proposed by James Connolly, Larkin's temporary replacement as head of the I.T.G.W.U., which eventually achieved his release. It also lost the workers much of whatever sympathy they had enjoyed from the *Freeman's Journal* and from the Irish Parliamentary Party. The strategy consisted simply in advising socialists to vote against Liberal candidates in all by-elections. Two days later the *Freeman's Journal* described this advice as "scandalous treachery". The *Irish Weekly Independent* headlined its account of the Albert Hall meeting: "Syndicalists, Socialists and Suffragettes Insult Irish Priests", and it reported the emergence at the meeting of the "cloven hoof of atheism and violence". Larkin was released after seventeen days of a seven month sentence following Liberal set-backs in a number of by-elections.

In November the employers began to re-open without lifting

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201 *Freeman's Journal*, 3 November, 1913.
202 Ibid., 5 November, 1913.
203 8 November, 1913.
the lock-out against the workers of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union by importing 'blackleg' labour from England. There were also workers who were beginning to accept the employers terms. Mass picketing organized by James Connolly failed to stem the flow of 'scab' labour, and he closed the port of Dublin. In so doing he was breaking a number of contracts and assurances which was used by the employers to bolster their case that the Union leadership could not be trusted. The overall situation was deteriorating quickly. British labour leaders were becoming increasingly resentful of Larkin's methods which he kept beyond their control and of the threat which he posed to the then stabilizing British labour front. Larkin, when released from gaol, announced not that he would seek their advice or an agreement with them but that he would appeal to the British working class directly over the heads of the leadership in what has been called his "fiery cross" campaign through England, Scotland and Wales.

Meanwhile in Dublin Connolly was calling for "four battallion of trained men". Connolly was echoing a number of similar calls which had been made by Larkin ever since the 1908 Carter's strike. On the first day of the Tramway Strike Larkin had returned to the theme in the speech which

204 Freeman's Journal, 11 November, 1913.
205 Cork Examiner, 13 November, 1913.
206 Freeman's Journal, 14 November, 1913.
207 Emmet Larkin, James Larkin, op. cit., p. 53.
had led to his conviction. He had referred to the situation in Ulster saying:

If it is right and legal for the men of Ulster to arm, why should it not be right and legal for the men of Dublin to arm themselves to protect themselves? You will need it. I don't offer advice which I am not prepared to adopt myself. You know me and you know that when I say a thing I will do it. So arm and I'll arm. You have to face hired assassins. If Sir Edward Carson is right in telling the men of Ulster to form a Provisional Government in Ulster, I think I must be right too, in telling you to form a Provisional Government in Dublin. But whether you form a Provisional Government or not, you will require arms, for Aberdeen has promised Murphy not only police but soldiers, and my advice to you is to be round the doors and corners, and whenever one of your men is shot, shoot two of theirs.\(^{208}\)

The success of Sir Edward Carson was thus a crucial factor, greatly facilitating the emergence of other para-military groups in the country. A few days after his original call for four battalions, Connolly renewed the call for armed men, this time as a specific call for recruits. He announced that a "competent military officer, the son of the distinguished Irish general who defended Ladysmith would train them."\(^{209}\) Initially the movement appears to have been highly successful with large numbers enlisting, drilling and accompanying strikers' marches with hurley sticks, but the creation of the Irish Volunteers at the end of November resulted in a sharp decline. Sean O'Casey described the effect of the


\(^{209}\)Freeman's \textit{Journal}, 19 November, 1913.
The creation of the National Volunteers was one of the most effective blows which the Irish Citizen Army received. Thousands that had originally attached themselves to the Citizen Army passed over into the more attractive and better organized camp of the Volunteers.\textsuperscript{210}

There was a class antagonism between the two bodies, but the Volunteers were more middle class, more influential and provided one of the very few avenues of upward social mobility for the workers in Ireland. This influenced many, as Sean O'Casey put it, to prefer "Caithlin Ni Houlihan in a respectable dress than a Caithlin in the garb of a working woman".\textsuperscript{211}

Continuing efforts were being made to settle the labour dispute. A Peace Committee made up of Lord Mayor Sherlock, Rt. Hon. M.F. Fox, Prof. Mahaffy, the Dean of St. Patrick, Prof. Bastable, Prof. Kettle and Rev. Denham Osborne attempted in late November to find grounds to bring the two sides together. But the employers continued to refuse to participate in any talks unless the Union were reorganized with new officers.\textsuperscript{212} The Union was beginning to run short on British support. Larkin, angered at the refusal of the British trade union movement to authorize a massive sympathy strike, redoubled his attacks on British labour leaders as well as his attempts to appeal to the rank and file over their heads. The leaders and the unions retaliated by curtailing the support without which Dublin workers


\textsuperscript{211}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{212}Irish Weekly Independent, 22 November, 1913.
could not hold out. The men were trickling back to work for employers who refused to alter their stand on the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union despite appeals by Dr. Walsh, the Roman Catholic Archbishop, who had finally come to the conclusion that the men deserved a better deal. Religious animosity against Larkin remained strong, however, and an article by James Stephens resulted in a young man going to Liberty Hall and breaking up the type of the Irish Worker because the article had been critical of priests. When the Dublin Metropolitan Police were summoned, they refused to arrest the young man. This was one further example of the partiality of the police in the labour troubles of 1913, and it helps to explain why, as the strike collapsed, most of the frustration and anger generated among the workers and their leaders could be directed at the Government rather than at the Irish employers. The final position of the British trade union movement towards the strike also contributed to the politicization of the economic discontent which was at the root of the 1913 disputes.

Lawrence McCaffery has offered the following explanation of

213 *Freeman's Journal*, 1 December, 1913.
the role of the Dublin labour disturbances of 1913 in the nationalist revolution.

Larkin was defeated in 1914, but the Dublin strike provided insights into the character of the Irish Question and helped to create a revolutionary spirit in nationalist Ireland. The decision of the British Trades Union Congress to limit the support of the strike indicated that the British proletariat was unwilling to make sacrifices for Irish Workers in the cause of class solidarity. National prejudices were stronger than class loyalties. This gulf that divided the working class in Britain from the proletariat in Ireland reflected the lack of understanding that people from all classes in Britain had for Ireland and the Irish people. The defeat of 1914, and the indifference of British labour opinion to economic and social injustices in Ireland forced the Irish to become more nationalistic and revolutionary. Many believed that only a revolution completely destroying British influence in Ireland would clear the way for a transformation of Irish society.216

If revolution be defined in the first sense given to the word by Peter Calvert as "A process in which the political direction of a state becomes increasingly discredited in the eyes of either the population as a whole or certain key sections of it",217 then the labour troubles of Dublin in 1913 are very much part of the process of revolution, indeed as was the Government's toleration of Volunteer armies and of a provisional government in Ulster. As far as labour was concerned the 1913 strike and lock-out broke down the links which had existed between labour in Britain and labour in Ireland, one of the last assimilationist relationships between

216 The Irish Question 1800-1922, op. cit., pp. 144 - 145.
217 A Study of Revolution, op. cit., p. 4.
the two countries. A modern study of revolution, while making no reference to the Irish experience, offered a general description of pre-revolutionary conditions which fitted the Irish developments of 1913 very well:

As a government and its authority weaken, problems that governments should solve go untended with the development of distress, individuals and groups organize in order to protest, and at the same time the government is unable to control or stifle them. Weakness thus not only encourages but it permits the growth of dissident groups, spawning a plurality of loyalties and chaotic interactions....All governments rest on the myth of their supremacy; weakness in government is one acid to that myth. As the myth declines so also does the base of loyalty upon which every government rests.

The failure of the government to check the growth of the Ulster Volunteers seriously undermined the myth of supremacy; the weakness of the government in the face of that movement encouraged the emergence of the Midland Volunteer Force, the Irish Citizen Army and the Irish National Volunteers.

The conditions of the Dublin working class were the source of acute frustration for Dublin workers, and their discontent was all the more easily politicized because of the lack of Irish representation in the Government. This made it all the easier to once again blame the traditional target for all Irish frustrations, Britain, rather than concentrate on the employers who were, after all, Irish. At this time James Connolly at the Albert Hall meeting could still maintain that

218 See Karl W. Deutsch, Nationalism and Social Communications, op. cit., p. 120.
"whether there was a green flag or a red flag mattered little to a man who had nothing in his stomach". But the reaction among members of the Irish Citizen Army upon the foundation of the Volunteers indicated the way public opinion was moving or rather staying with the Home Rule commitment into which the Irish people had been socialized over many years. The tendency to blame Britain for all Irish difficulties common to the Irish Parliamentary Party, Sinn Fein and the Irish Republican Brotherhood, when applied to the labour difficulties contributed to the heightening of the potential for violence in Ireland. The deep frustration of the Dublin working class transformed into anger by Jim Larkin was focussed on Britain, re-inforcing pressures toward anti-British violence. The violent language used in Ireland as part of the Ulster campaign as well as in the labour dispute also led to acceptance of violence, at least as a threat in politics. As Gurr points out:

Men who normatively accept the threat of violence as a means of collective behaviour frequently cross the threshold from verbal aggression to overt violence. Those who threaten political violence from utilitarian considerations often decide that it is necessary to resort to actual violence to maintain the credibility of their threats.222

Thus, the potential for violence was heightened, and the situation also presented opportunities for advancement of its goals to the Irish Republican Brotherhood. The type of tensions present in Irish society in 1913, furnish, as has

220 Freeman's Journal, 3 November, 1913.
221 See Ted Robert Gurr, Why Men Rebel, op. cit., p. 34.
222 Ibid., p. 157.
been pointed out:

... fertile soil for the emergence of the mob leader, the potential dictator, the revolutionary or religious prophet .... Such leaders arise because they provide people with an interpretation that brings order into their confused psychological worlds. The clever leader will sense the causes of dissatisfaction, will realize which old loyalties remain unshaken and which are being seriously challenged. He will spread among the confused and eager souls a rationalization that from their points of view, combines the best of the old and the best of the new.223

The 1913 labour unrest in Dublin alienated the working class from the Irish Parliamentary Party; and while they remained basically Home Rulers, they identified with the Volunteers rather than with other bodies which were more closely identified with the Irish Party; and the revolution which would topple the Party came appreciably closer.

It has been fashionable among left-wing commentators on modern Irish history to quote Lenin's approving comments on the Easter Rising, but his comments on the 1913 labour crisis have usually not been as popular because they were so obviously mistaken. But they may suggest that his later comments were also based on an inadequate understanding of the Irish situation. Of 1913 Lenin said:

The Dublin events mark a turning point in the history of the labour movement and of socialism in Ireland. Murphy threatened to destroy the Irish labour unions. He only succeeded in destroying the last remnants of the influence of the nationalist Irish bourgeoisie over the proletariat in Ireland. He has helped to harden an independent, revolutionary labour movement in Ireland, free from nationalist prejudices.224


1914 was the year in which the Irish Parliamentary Party anticipated the victorious culmination of its long struggle for Home Rule. The Home Rule Bill was scheduled to pass through the House of Commons for the third and last time; the suspensive veto of the House of Lords being thus overborne. Industrial and commercial Dublin which had been so disturbed by labour troubles in the latter part of 1913 was returning to normal with most workers, no longer sustained by the British labour movement, returning to work on the terms set by the employers. The Irish Volunteer movement was expanding but most recruits were firm supporters of John Redmond. The Irish Party did not exercise control over the new force but its composition made it unlikely that it would present any threat. Ulster opposition to Home Rule continued to be the Party leaders' major worry and they continued to treat the threats and fulminations of the Ulster unionists as if they were sheer bluff, reposing their confidence in the parliamentary majority which the Liberal Government enjoyed. The only segment of nationalist opinion in Ireland calling for the conciliation of Ulster Unionist opinion at this time, William O'Brien's All-for-Ireland League, was being ridiculed by the Redmondites.

Early in the year Southern unionists displayed some
uneasiness concerning the sincerity of their Ulster counterparts. The Earl of Arran was reported as predicting that the Ulster Covenanters would capitulate in their fight against Home Rule, they would abandon the South of Ireland to its dreadful fate and settle for the exclusion of part of Ulster from the provisions of the Act. In the nationalist camp, with Home Rule's star still in the ascendant, no one paid much attention. A few days later, however, the Earl of Arran's fears received some confirmation from F. E. Smith who said in Liverpool that exclusion of Ulster was the sine qua non of the Unionist Party giving any consideration to Home Rule for the rest of Ireland.

The Government's continued determination to see Home Rule through was affirmed by Sir Herbert Samuel, the Postmaster General, when in Redcar on 14 January he said:

This much, to our minds is certain, that the Irish difficulty never will, never can, and never should be settled except on the basis of extending to the Irish people the rights to manage their own local affairs in their own way, through their own representatives. If that can be done with the assent of Ulster, and through there being embodied in the Bill such safeguards as will meet the wishes of Ulster, no one will be more pleased than the Irish Nationalists themselves, except perhaps it may be the Government to which I have the honour to belong, but done it must be, with the consent of Ulster or not.

It was with such firm assurances behind him that John Redmond addressed a large Home Rule meeting in Waterford and declared:

1 Irish Weekly Independent, 4 January, 1914.
2 Cork Examiner, 12 January, 1914.
3 Ibid., 15 January, 1914.
... to-day we are face to face with the year 1914, for which we have so long watched and waited. What are our own prospects this year? If the present Government and the present Parliament remain in existence and if the opinion of the House of Commons has not changed, the Home Rule Bill, under the operation of the Parliament Act, will automatically become the law of the land. Unless one or other of these things happen, nothing can prevent this result. As certainly as the spring will succeed the winter of gloom, as certainly as the full glory of summer will succeed the promise of spring, so certainly and automatically will the Home Rule Bill become law ... The Prime Minister is as firm as a rock.4

One should note here the hypothetical note which crept into the declaration through the qualifications listed by Redmond as a prelude to his assertion of confidence. Redmond knew only too well that there were some Cabinet Ministers and a substantial body of Liberal back benchers who were inclined to sympathize with Ulster's fears and who favoured at least temporary exclusion of part of Ulster from the operation of the Bill. Yet the Irish Party was confident enough of ultimate victory to cancel the 1914 appeal for the Home Rule Fund in view of the imminence of its triumph and of the fact that the 1913 appeal had been the most successful in forty years.5

Some of the specific provisions of the Home Rule Bill did meet with criticism in Ireland. The Gaelic League in particular protested against the retention of control over the Post Office by Britain.6 The Gaelic League was at this time also attacking the Board of Education for policies which the League considered

4Freeman's Journal, 26 January, 1914.
5Cork Examiner, 24 January, 1914.
6Freeman's Journal, 1 January, 1914.
as inimical to the Irish language and this attack brought the League a sharp rebuttal from Dr. O'Dwyer, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Limerick, who advised the League to work on changing the attitude towards the language of Irish parents rather than attack the Board for providing the type of education which the parents were demanding.  

The major contentious and disruptive issue in the south of Ireland in early 1914 was related to the labour troubles of the previous year and not directly connected to the Home Rule issue. Larkin and Connolly, bitterly disillusioned by the abandonment of their cause by British trade union leaders, issued a manifesto at the beginning of the year in which they denounced British trade union officials and in particular those of the Seamen and Firemen's Union for 'wholesale scabbing' during the Dublin labour troubles. But despite a resolution by the Dublin Branch of this Union not to return to work, the port of Dublin was reported open again a few days later, and the Irish Weekly Independent gleefully reported that the workers of Dublin were breaking free of the tyranny of Liberty Hall and returning to work in ever increasing numbers.

Dublin labour leaders remained highly disturbed at the behaviour of the police throughout the troubled months of 1913 and Larkin's reaction at what he preceived as an affront on

7 Ibid., 2 February, 1914.
8 Cork Examiner, 1 January, 1914.
9 Freeman's Journal, 7 January, 1914.
10 Ibid., 10 January, 1914.
11 Ibid., 10 January, 1914.
the part of British labour's leadership combined with resentment at police behaviour led him into a tirade against the British flag which he described as "The dirty flag - which covered more disease and degradation than any other flag I know of in the world." Words which resulted in Captain White, the trainer of the Irish Citizen Army, feeling compelled to leave the platform which he was sharing with Larkin.\textsuperscript{12} The Irish Republican Brotherhood attempted to capitalize on labour discontent and Bulmer Hobson, one of the republican leaders most unpopular with labour, addressed a meeting to protest at police behaviour and to call for an independent enquiry.\textsuperscript{13} This was shortly before municipal elections in Dublin where a considerable number of labour candidates were in the running. The Rev. Patrick Power, S.J. delivered a sermon attacking Larkinism\textsuperscript{14} and the attitude of the Roman Catholic Church was of some influence in limiting Labour victories to two in the Dublin Corporation elections which were described as a "Great Nationalist Victory" by the \textit{Freeman's Journal}.\textsuperscript{15} Dr. Walsh, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, wrote to Lord Mayor Sherlock congratulating him for the Nationalist victory over "a combination of influences which, in addition to the havoc they have wrought in the industrial world of the city, have done no little harm in

\textsuperscript{12} \textit{Freeman's Journal}, 12 January, 1914.

\textsuperscript{13} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{14} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., 15 and 16 January.
blunting, if not deadening, the moral and religious sense of not a few among the working population of Dublin".  

While Larkin won few seats his candidates received 10,337 votes to their opponents' 14,978, a substantial showing in the face of the kind of campaign mounted against him.  

The Dublin strike, however, was virtually over and Larkin urged the workers back to work in the shipping companies.  

Larkin's defeat was quite complete as the agreement which the building trades employees were forced to conclude shows.  

Their union agreed to the following statement:  

We undertake on behalf of the United Builders' Labourers and General Workers of Dublin Trade Union that none of our members will remain or become in future - members of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union.  

Further, that our members will not take part in or support any form of Sympathetic Strike, they will handle all materials, no matter from where or how delivered, and carry out all instructions given to them in the course of their employment; they will also work amicably with all other employees whether they be members of a union or not, and none of our members will in any way interfere with or make any objection to work with those who have already signed any agreement.  

Any of our members who may make any breach of any of these undertakings will be immediately dismissed from our Union.  

The Employers undertaking to re-employ such of our members as they may require, on the terms in force previous to the 13th of September last.  

Signed on behalf of the United Builders' Labourers and General Workers of Dublin Trade Union.  

17See Emmet Larkin, James Larkin, op. cit., p. 149.  
Each individual employee in the building trades was then required to sign a further declaration that:

I, the undersigned, am a member of the United Builders' Labourers and General Workers of Dublin Trade Union, and I agree to act in accordance with the undertaking, dated the 31st January, 1914, which that Union has given on my behalf.19

The labour troubles were settled on such generally humiliating terms in most trades and a considerable number of workers were not rehired which led to what was to be the last convulsion of the Dublin strike and lock-out when the police charged a group of unemployed men led by Captain White in a protest march on the Mansion House. Inspector Purcell of the Dublin Metropolitan Police and Captain White being injured. Captain White was charged with assault though the charge was later dropped.20 The strikers were also made to bear the brunt of the spiritual assault of the entire Roman Catholic hierarchy when in late February the bishops issued a joint Lenten Pastoral reaffirming the teachings of Pope Leo XIII. The Pastoral was a strong attack on socialism and syndicalism though the attitude of employers was also deplored. The bishops clearly did not recognize the impetus given to the fight by the imminence of Home Rule which encouraged both employers and employees to go to extraordinary lengths to enlarge the boundaries of their control over the Irish economy.

20Ibid., 14 March, 1914 and 15 April, 1914.
The Pastoral said in part that:

The sense of misery, caused by this deplorable strife, was deepened by the fact that whatever is to be said about the instigation, the contest arose and went on between Irish employers and Irish workers, to the serious prejudice of the nation's interests at a time when the near prospect of native government should have raised the heart of true Irishmen and drawn them together in harmonious and dignified relations. Had the healing influence of native rule been felt for even a few years we cannot believe that the bitter privations, the enormous waste, the loss, the shame, the sin of this insensate conflict, would have been entailed on a city, in which commerce and manufacture need to be fostered with tender care, instead of being recklessly endangered in a senseless war between workers and employers.21

Despite the defeat and the condemnations which were heaped on the strikers the municipal elections had demonstrated that Larkin had retained a large measure of the confidence of the working class. This was in part due to the operation of traditional Irish patterns of thought whereby his failure was attributed to English treachery or to betrayal on the part of English labour leaders.22

The 1914 Lenten Pastoral was also indicative of the very high, not to say exaggerated, hopes which the Roman Catholic hierarchy placed in "the healing influence of native rule". One of the Irish Parliamentary Party's enthusiastic clerical supporters was designated to be Archbishop of Cashel and Emly in 1914 and early in the year he expressed his hopes for Home Rule saying that "when times have changed and prosperity

21Irish Weekly Independent, 28 February, 1914.
has arrived, and when Ireland in the near future will be once again a nation, the priests and people of Cashel will ever stand loyal to the faith which their fathers placed before them". He returned to the theme of the wonders of Home Rule at his consecration when, in reply to the numerous congratulatory addresses which he had received, the new Archbishop said:

We rejoice too, because we are assembled on the eve of the crowning victory of our race. This is the year of Ireland's political freedom. Before many months have passed, a Home Rule Act will be on the Statute Books of the realm, and Ireland will be a nation once again. For over a century, since the day, when by bribery and fraud our native Government was destroyed, we have struggled for freedom. Now, thanks to the efforts of a united and disciplined Irish Party under the admirable leadership of John Redmond, we are approaching the hour of victory.

These statements clearly refer to the identification of state and nation which was a feature of continental nationalism but which was alien to British political thought. Austen Chamberlain put forward a conflicting view of nationalism at the beginning of the Parliamentary session, before the first reading of the Home Rule Bill. He spoke of the Protestants of Ulster:

Their feeling was that they were being robbed of their rights and privileges by procedure begun in fraud and to be consumated by force. He could not understand the attitude of Liberal members towards Ulster. If the people of Ulster were Greeks or Armenians they would say they were rightly struggling to be free, but being British

24Ibid., 19 January, 1914.
citizens they refused them sympathy or justice or constitutional liberty ... He thought the exclusion of Ulster, although it would not be a settlement of the Irish Question, although it would not make the Bill just or fair to the loyalists of the South, and safe or prudent for Great Britain, would have one positive advantage - that it would be a statutory denial and negation of the claim of Ireland to be regarded as an independent nation.  

The message was clear and the ideological contrast between the two attitudes is stark. In Austen Chamberlain's statement the notion of nationalism which was behind the Irish demand for Home Rule as well as separatist opinion was categorically denied. The references to Greeks and Armenians were linked to the liberal understanding of nationalism as based on will. It was this understanding of nationalism which made it difficult for the Liberal Government to coerce the Protestants of Ulster into a nation to which they did not will to belong and out of the one to which will attached them. Many of the Southern unionists were resisting the policy of excluding part of Ulster as a serious alternative to Home Rule rather than as a tactical weapon to defeat the measure and Professor Mahaffy and Sir Horace Plunkett both publicly protested against any plans to exclude part of Ulster.  

Southern unionists were growing increasingly isolated at this time. It was obvious that the exclusion of what could be called Protestant Ulster was an acceptable way out of their dilemma  

26 Freeman's Journal, 24 February, 1914.
for many Liberals and that it was also acceptable to the Tory leadership but Southern unionists were hardly ready to swallow the gall and wormwood of allying themselves with the nationalist opponents of partition.

One issue did link north and south in a common cause at this time and this was the continuing efforts made to retain Queenstown as a trans-Atlantic port of call. By 1914 the White Star Line had followed the lead of the Cunard Line in abandoning the port. Hopes were briefly raised when it appeared that the Hamburg-Amerika Line might make use of the port. 27 A few weeks later, however, worsening diplomatic relations with Germany led to the British Government denying the German line use of the port. The continuing inability of the Irish Parliamentary Party to effect any change in the situation of Queenstown despite an all-Ireland meeting calling for an enquiry into the matter adversely affected its prestige. 28

Another proposed solution for Queenstown which came to nought was put forward later in the year by Patrick Pearse. At a meeting to discuss "Ireland's Commercial Isolation" in Springfield, Massachusetts, Pearse urged the creation of an Irish-American shipping line which would use Queenstown as its Irish terminal. 29

The continuation of the long string of by-election defeats for the Government begun in 1913 was still shaking the Liberal

27 Cork Examiner, 3 February, 1914.
28 Ibid., 17 February, 1914.
resolve on Home Rule. In February, Mr. Masterman, who had been brought into the Cabinet as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, failed to win a seat by 25 votes.\(^{30}\) In May he failed in a second attempt in Ipswich.\(^{31}\) In the interim the Liberals had also lost the Leith seat.\(^{32}\) These defeats were demoralizing and inevitably reinforced the case of those who favoured the exclusion of part of Ulster from the Home Rule measure. The ground for a watering down of Home Rule was laid by Augustine Birrell speaking in Bristol when, after commenting that the Government's task in dealing with the Irish Question was rendered "almost impossible" by the attitude of the Opposition, he announced that a "take it or leave it" proposal for the settlement of the Home Rule controversy was about to be put forward.\(^{33}\) It was to be expected that the Government would adopt a form of exclusion of Ulster from Home Rule. Robert Kee has pointed out that John Redmond had been consulted as to the Government's planned offer. Redmond consented, though only reluctantly, to a proposed temporary exclusion of those Ulster counties asking for exclusion by a majority vote. He was apparently informed, however, that this was the ultimate concession which he would be called upon to make and that should the offer be refused the Government would proceed with the Bill applying it to all

\(^{30}\)Cork Examiner, 20 February, 1914.

\(^{31}\)Ibid., 25 May, 1914.

\(^{32}\)Ibid., 27 February, 1914.

\(^{33}\)Ibid., 2 March, 1914.
of Ireland.  

The details of the proposal were revealed by the Prime Minister during the second reading debate on the Bill. John Redmond immediately signified his acceptance of a six year period of exclusion for those Ulster counties which chose to remain outside the provisions of the measure but Sir Edward Carson, supported by the Leader of the Opposition, rejected the proposal as inadequate, offering merely a six year stay of execution for the Ulster Unionists. Redmond's ready acceptance provided his opponents with a rallying point upon which they could all meet in spite of differing hopes as to the ultimate destiny of Ireland. Members of William O'Brien's All-for-Ireland League launched a fierce attack on Redmond for accepting temporary exclusion and Tim Healy argued that the Government, having conceded six year exclusion, would next concede permanent exclusion. The Freeman's Journal in a leading article bitterly denounced O'Brien and Healy for attempting to stab Home Rule in the back and described them as creating more difficulties over the Home Rule Bill than Sir Edward Carson himself. James Connolly, speaking at Swords also denounced exclusion even on a temporary basis. He declared that "the workers of the North were not going to have an excluded Ulster; and if the

34 The Green Flag, op. cit., p. 482.
35 Cork Examiner, 10 March, 1914.
36 Freeman's Journal, 10 March, 1913.
37 Ibid.
Government did exclude it the civil war which might be thus averted would be nothing to the fight the labour force would give them". 38 The statement is of interest demonstrating that Connolly was overestimating the solidarity of labour throughout Ireland despite the fact that as Belfast organizer or the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union he was constantly reminded that Protestant workers at any rate were strongly opposed to Home Rule. The Ulster working-class or the preponderant part of it being relatively well integrated into the strong British working-class saw more hope in that alliance than in one with the perhaps more militant but weak and just defeated southern Irish working-class. Belfast socialism has been contemptuously dismissed by militant socialists as 'gas and water-works' socialism but there can be no denying that in Belfast where gas was under municipal control it cost 1s 9 1/2 d per 1000 cubic feet whereas in Dublin privately owned gas cost 3s 6 d per 1000 cubic feet. 39

The extreme nationalists also refused to follow Redmond's lead on the exclusion proposal. **Sinn Fein** said:

The exclusion of Ulster or any portion of Ulster from a Home Rule measure is in itself traitorous. When God made this country, He fixed its frontiers beyond the power of man to alter while the sea rises and falls ... So long as England is strong and Ireland is weak, England may continue to oppress this country, but she shall not dismember it. 40

38 Ibid., 17 March, 1914.
39 Ibid., 2 March, 1914.
40 Quoted in Robert Mitchell Henry: *The Evolution of Sinn Fein*, op. cit., p. 149.
Irish Freedom expressed similar sentiments in less theocratic but more bellicose terms:

As for Ulster, Ulster is Ireland's and shall remain Ireland's though the Irish nation in its political capacity were gall and wormwood to every Unionist in Ulster yet shall they swallow it. We will fight them if they want fighting: but we shall never let them go, never.41

At a Sinn Fein meeting to protest against the temporary exclusion proposal the countess Markievicz urged greater militancy upon the Irish Volunteers arguing on the basis on the success of the Ulster Volunteers "that the only man England would listen to was the man with a gun in his hand".42 The impact of the Ulster Volunteer Force in securing a temporary exclusion did in fact stimulate interest in the Irish National Volunteers. Professor Thomas Kettle called on the University College, Dublin Literary and Historical Society to support and co-operate with the Volunteer movement.43 The St. Patrick's day celebrations were used by the Volunteers themselves as an occasion for numerous displays and marches which also stimulated recruiting.

Meanwhile the Irish Parliamentary Party leaders bitterly denounced the Unionist refusal to accept temporary exclusion and solemnly declared that no further concessions would be made.44 The Unionists did offer one concession. Mr. Bonar Law offered to ensure the approval of the House of Lords for

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41 Ibid.
42 Freeman's Journal, 23 March, 1914.
43 Ibid., 17 March, 1914.
44 Cork Examiner, 16 March, 1914.
the Home Rule Bill if it were first approved by a referendum. The Government naturally turned the offer down. The Government was as well aware as was the Opposition of the probable outcome of such a referendum. Pro-Home Rule opinion in England was on the whole lukewarm while anti-Home Rule opinion was generally far stronger, in a substantial number of cases bordering on the fanatic. The long series of by-election victories won by Unionists on a "hands off Ulster" platform also made perfectly clear the direction of British public opinion. Whatever way have been the case in 1910 and 1912, Home Rule for Ireland including Protestant Ulster was no longer the will of the British electorate in 1914. The realization that Home Rule for all Ireland would be defeated in a referendum undermined the Government's resolve, particularly as the Liberal Party maintained as an ideological characteristic that it was more democratic than were the Conservatives. The major function of the Ulster Volunteer Force had not been to overcome the British Army or the Government but rather to demonstrate to British public opinion the earnestness of the Ulster Protestants' detestation of Home Rule and their will to resist. It also kept down the incidence of anomic violence in Ulster which would otherwise have been far more prevalent and would have provided a pretext for intervention by British armed forces. In the face of the anti-Catholic and anti-Irish sentiment in Great Britain,

the Irish Volunteers could not perform an analogous function. Everyone knew that the vast majority of Southern Irishmen wanted Home Rule and that they had been asking for it for generations so that the existence of the Irish Volunteers was unlikely to make that demand any better known. The insistence on the part of the Irish National Volunteers, as distinct from the Midland Volunteer Force, that they had no quarrel with their Ulster counterparts was more confusing still; since in that case their only possible enemy was a Government which up to their formation at least, had been giving them what they had been asking for in the first place. The logic behind the Irish Volunteers was then made harder to understand for British public opinion than that behind the Ulster Volunteers. Internally of course the Volunteers provided an outlet for political frustrations which were growing as the Government's resolve weakened.

In March 1914 the Irish Volunteers received a shot in the arm and the British Government a sharp reminder of the strength of pro-Ulster sympathies in the army. The Curragh Mutiny or Incident was a highly unusual episode in British military history and the story took a few days to unfold. Initial reports in Irish newspapers were confused as to what had in fact occurred and it was only when Brigadier-General Gough returned from the War Office and announced that he had a pledge from the Secretary of State for War that the army would not be used in Ulster against the unionists that the
possible import of the incident for Home Rule began to be realized. The prompt repudiation of Colonel Seely's pledge by the Prime Minister allowed the Irish press to play down what had occurred and the Cork Examiner, for example, said:

The documents which were laid on the table of the House yesterday have put a very different complexion on the military mutiny from the impression which was created in Parliament on the previous night. It was believed by the Opposition that General Gough had triumphed, and that he had brought back to the Curragh a document signed by the Army Council, which guaranteed that he would not be asked to proceed to Ulster, or if he and his troops were ordered there, they would go without arms. It is up to this officer and gentleman now to explain how he fell into the error that the document in question gives any such guarantee, or relieves him from the ordinary duties of a soldier. The Government have it is clear, shown no weakness in a grave crisis. The eloquent and convincing speech of the Premier has cleared the air, and has attested definitely that there will be no truckling to military officers no matter what their social position may be.\(^{46}\)

The situation was not so simply clarified, however. General Gough had received assurances that the army would not be used against the Ulster loyalists. The Prime Minister's counter-assurances to the House of Commons and to nationalist Ireland were considerably undermined by Lord Morley who admitted to the House of Lords that he had had a hand in drafting the offending document now in the hands of General Gough but who also firmly maintained that the guarantees contained therein were a clear statement of Government policy.\(^{47}\)

\(^{46}\) 26 March, 1914.

\(^{47}\) Cork Examiner, 26 March, 1914.
The Curragh incident uncovered a rift in the Cabinet as well as within the army. Disaffection in the army was exposed a few days later in a series of reports, denials and confirmations that two high ranking army officers had resigned because of the Prime Minister's repudiation of Colonel Seely.  

The Curragh incident occurred because there was considerable confusion as to the role of the army in Ireland. It revealed, what might not have emerged in the absence of such confusion, that the military hierarchy was uneasy about undertaking operations in Ulster and, more significantly still, it exposed divisions within the Cabinet which might well have made it impossible for the Government to use force in Ulster. General Gough and the other officers who provoked the crisis had been given the option by the General Officer Commanding in Ireland to refuse to move against Ulster. Had that option not been given there might have been a number of resignations but most officers would probably have carried out their orders. The letter which Lieutenant-Colonel Brett wrote to his Brigade Headquarters during the crisis illustrates what must have been the attitude of many if not most, of the officers involved.

Colonel Brett wrote:

The result of the address given this morning by Major-General Sir Charles Fergusson to the officers of my Battalion is that the officers agree to do their duty in the matter of Ulster. I wish however to point out the chief reason for our decision. This reason is that Sir Charles Fergusson has given us the assurances of the G.O.C.-in-Chief that the action of the Ministry in ordering

48 Ibid., 27, 28 and 31 March, 1914.
the Army to take part in operations against Ulster has the full approval of His Majesty the King. The King has given the order, and we, one and all, obey him.

I would further point out, in the most emphatic manner, that our hearts are not in the work that we are likely to be called upon to perform - and that, until the fact of the King's approval had been explained to us, as stated above, the officers had all decided to come under the provisions of the 2nd paragraph of the War Office Secret Letter.

All our sympathies are with the Loyalists of Ulster, and I wish it to be clearly understood, and the fact brought to the notice of the highest authorities, that it is not willingness to take action against these Loyalists but a sense of our duty to the King and the Army, that has influenced us not to come under the provisions of the 2nd paragraph of the above quoted W. O. letter.\textsuperscript{49}

Major-General Sir Charles Fergusson was largely responsible for limiting the extent of resignations at the Curragh and as he himself put it - "I admit that I used the King's name freely, it was the most effective argument with those who were most stubborn: Loyalty to the King was in fact the determining factor in inducing many officers to withhold their resignations."\textsuperscript{50} There had been in fact no mutiny at the Curragh but because of confusion at the War Office and in the mind of the general commanding the troops in Ireland, army officers had been allowed to express their political opinions and they had done so in no uncertain terms, but they had not disobeyed orders to move into Ulster.


The effect of the Curragh incident on John Redmond was disequilibrating. His biographer has written that:

The sudden crisis had taken Redmond utterly by surprise. Immersed for so many years in Parliamentary life and procedure, he was liable at all times to be unaware of external forces which upset the calculations and often change the destinies of Governments. He had refused absolutely to believe that Asquith and his Cabinet would fail to assert the authority of Parliament. He had been utterly reluctant to believe that Conservative leaders in England would ever commit themselves to such methods as Bonar Law had made his own, while the Curragh revolt shocked and grieved him almost as a personal blow, he never lost faith in the ability of the Cabinet to deal with the situation. Least of all did he suspect that some of the highest officers in the War Office were intimately concerned in the Curragh episode.  

Yet as the Cabinet struggled to regain control it is reported that the Chief of the Imperial General Staff was informed by all the Commanders-in-Chief and Divisional Commanders that they were unanimous in their determination not to fight against Ulster. This was the real army revolt which, unlike the Curragh incident involving relatively junior commanders, reached the apex of the command structure of the British Army though it remained largely hidden from public view. The attitude of many senior officers was reflected in the comments of the army commander in Belfast, Brigadier-General Count Gliechen, who despite his junior rank was by family connections a member of high society. His understanding of Government policy may well have been wrong but it illustrates the feeling 

52Katharine Chorley, Armies and the Art of Revolution, op. cit., p. 93.
of the aristocracy and of high ranking officers about the Liberal Government's Irish policy. The Count wrote that:

The whole policy was a dirty one, all the dirtier because it was not a clear one, even to themselves. They meant to send troops to take genuinely precautionary measures in the first instance, thinking that they would kill two birds with one stone, and thereby irritate the Ulstermen into taking steps which would put themselves (Ulstermen) in the wrong and which would justify the Government in sending over strong forces to coerce them. And if the Ulstermen showed sufficient control and did not blast out, they could say that these movements were purely precautionary, and they could prove it.

The Ulstermen's self-control it was that stopped this Machiavellian game, and Gough's action (a result of A.P.'s misconception of the apparent - or was it true conception of the real? - intentions of the Government) gave them an extremely nasty jar, and proved to them that the Army was not prepared to act as a cat's paw in carrying out their dirty jobs.53

John Redmond may have remained confident that the cabinet could still effectively deal with the situation but Asquith now knew that Ulster would not be coerced and Bonar Law, kept informed by General Wilson, knew it also. Whatever he might do from this point on John Redmond could not secure Home Rule for all Ireland as long as Ulster continued to resist. He was probably unaware of the extent to which disaffection existed in the army and in the general staff at a time when the menace of war made the Government extremely reluctant to try conclusions with the generals. It was the unreliability of the army, convinced of the basic loyalty of Ulstermen and of the disloyalty of the Irish Roman Catholic Nationalists, which secured the exclusion of Ulster rather than the military

might of the Ulster Volunteer Force. In the public mind, however, particularly in Ireland, the Government's inaction on Ulster following the Curragh Incident did give the impression of a weak government capitulating to a force of ill-armed amateur soldiers. This impression greatly stimulated Irish Volunteer recruiting and the upsurge of enthusiasm was particularly noticeable in Belfast. Elsewhere in Ireland there were also new developments which were in part due to the influence of the Incident. The Irish Volunteer Fund was launched and a type of women's auxiliary to the Volunteers was also formed. The objects of this body, the Cumann na mBan were announced as:

1) to advance the cause of Irish liberty,
2) to organize Irish women in furtherance of this object,
3) to assist in arming and equipping a body of Irishmen for the defence of Ireland, and
4) to form a fund for the purpose, to be called the "Defence of Ireland Fund."

The apparent success of unionist militancy brought about the situation described by Maureen Wall in the following terms.

Carsonism brought a great emotional release which was soon apparent in Dublin and throughout the country. Defiant gestures were no longer confined to a few political leaders and demagogues. Speeches and writings showed a rapid rise in temperature; uniforms were invented and worn without self-consciousness; public parades and manoeuvres took

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54 Denis McCullough, "The Events in Belfast" Capuchin Annual 1966, p. 381.
56 Ibid., 3 April, 1914.
place without fear of either public ridicule or intervention by the police.\textsuperscript{57}

Home Rulers flocked into the Irish Volunteers because they sensed that John Redmond was in difficulty trying to resist a partition scheme introduced apparently because the Government feared the Ulster Volunteers. The most significant result of this was that because of the organizational structure of the Irish Volunteers, largely the work of Bulmer Hobson, the extremists were acquiring for the first time in thirty years a captive mass audience of Irishmen who could be exposed to their propaganda.\textsuperscript{58}

The key to the propaganda of the opponents of John Redmond from within the Nationalist camp had been partition, and the Curragh incident greatly increased the likelihood of such an outcome. The proposed scheme still called for a temporary exclusion measure but the series of by-election defeats sustained by the Government since the third Home Rule Bill had been introduced and the lack of public outcry in Britain following the Curragh incident made it appear probable that


\textsuperscript{58}One of the differences between Hobson and the other extremist leaders was his pragmatism which he placed at the disposal of his more romantically inclined colleagues. He was not trusted by the other leaders as he did not share their visions but without him there probably would have been no Fianna and the Irish Volunteers would not have been such fertile ground for the extremists. Unlike Pearse he rejected sacrificial gestures and he recognized the incompatibility of his revolutionary commitments with the beliefs of his Church from which he resigned in 1914.
by the time the six year temporary exclusion expired there would be a Conservative Government at the helm in a position to reverse the earlier decision. The dilemma confronting the Irish Parliamentary Party was a cruel one. Most of them were too old not to realize that if they rejected Home Rule now they were unlikely again to come this close to their lifetime goal and they were able to persuade themselves that given six years they would be able to overcome the reluctance of the Ulster unionists to join in a self-governing Ireland. This expectation may have been a delusion but it was a necessary one if they were to continue to accept the only form of Home Rule then available. Nationalist newspapers reflected this will to believe in a softening in Ulster resistance. During April for example there was hardly a reference to Ulster unionist activity which was not reported with a headline containing words such as "bluff", "bluster", "bunkum" or "humbug".

When the Home Rule Bill was given its second reading the All-for-Ireland members abstained because of the prospect of partition and the majority for the Bill was only eighty. The O'Brienites were denounced as the "Cork Traitors" in the Freeman's Journal but Irish public opinion was still firmly with Redmond. In the days following this vote entire pages in Nationalist newspapers were devoted to resolutions from Corporations, United Irish League meetings, District and Urban

59 Cork Examiner, 7 April, 1914.
60 7 April, 1914.
Councils, Poor Law Unions and other bodies in Ireland expressing continued support for John Redmond. A Sinn Fein resolution condemning the Irish Parliamentary Party for accepting partition which was being circulated to public bodies was generally marked "read" or consigned to the waste paper basket or even in many cases publicly burned.

Irish Parliamentary Party leaders were beginning to display increased interest in the Irish Volunteers as that movement gained in popularity and Joseph Devlin declared in Belfast on 14 April that:

If the necessity arose, a quarter of a million Volunteers - men in the prime of youth and manhood, to whom Irish nationality was dearer than life - would respond tomorrow to the call of Ireland to defend those liberties that the Home Rule Bill proposed to guarantee to her.61

Within two weeks it seemed as if the necessity to do precisely what Devlin had referred to might be arising. The Ulster Volunteer Force landed large quantities of arms at various points along the north-eastern coast of Ireland. The largest landing took place at Larne and the entire operation is usually referred to as the Larne gun-running. The planning was excellent; a large number of motor cars were on hand to receive the guns and ammunition and then melted away into the night. The details of the operation are not as important here as the effects which the gun-running produced on the minds of those involved in Irish affairs. For the Prime

61 Irish Weekly Independent, 18 April, 1914.
Minister it was no doubt a severe shock. In the House of Commons he referred to it as a "grave and unprecedented outrage" and he went on to assure the House "that His Majesty's Government will take without delay the proper steps to vindicate the authority of the law and to protect officers and servants of the King, and I may add His Majesty's subjects in the exercise of their duties and in the enjoyment of their legal rights." The Nationalist press in Ireland anticipated troop movements and the forceful suppression of the Ulster Volunteers. But since the Curragh Incident the army was not reliable and, as General Macready had reported in March, the Royal Irish Constabulary was run-down and demoralized. It has been pointed out that this was the result of deliberate Government policy. With Home Rule in the proximate future the Government had anticipated that the state of Ireland would become considerably more peaceful and that consequently the R.I.C. would safely be allowed to run down.

The Cabinet was aware of these difficulties and as Augustine Birrell later confessed:

There will always be a difference of opinion as to whether the leaders of this Ulster rebellion against the supremacy of the law should have been prosecuted. As to the offence, the law officers had no doubts. When or how the rebels were to be tried, and how many of them should be put in the dock, were more difficult questions to answer.

62 Freeman's Journal, 28 April, 1914.
63 See for example Cork Examiner, 28 April, 1914.
64 Richard Hawkins, "Dublin Castle and the Royal Irish Constabulary", op. cit., p. 168.
The consequences of not doing anything were obvious to everybody, but politics often consists of balancing one set of grave evils against another set; and after consideration the Cabinet, with my concurrence decided to leave it alone, although by doing nothing they almost negatives their right to be called a "Government" at all.65

The lack of any concrete Government response made a mockery of the expectations of nationalists in Ireland. These expectations had been sustained by the Home Rule press in leading articles such as that of the Cork Examiner which stated that:

Like the Curragh events, the Larne Harbour incident can only serve to strengthen the hands of the Government, and prove to the electors of Great Britain what a shoddy kind of "loyalty" is that while professing allegiance to the Constitution, imports arms from Germany and makes his Majesty's coastguards prisoners which carrying out a nefarious plot.66

The immediate beneficiaries of the Larne gun-running were naturally the Ulster Volunteers but the Irish Volunteers also benefitted substantially. Professor Thomas Kettle went to Larne and wrote a long letter to the Freeman's Journal in which he recorded his impressions and urged Nationalists to enroll and arm in the Irish Volunteers. His letter read in part:

Passing through the scene of last night's gun-running I address an appeal to Nationalist Ireland to make a prompt and worthy reply to this last move in a campaign of bullying her back into slavery. Let there be no mistake about the seriousness, and even acute peril of the situation. Whatever was

66 27 April, 1914.
the case before - and it was grave enough - Orange Ulster is now stocked with arms. The minimum estimate of the number landed last night at Larne, Bangor and Donaghadee is 45,000 rifles and 3,500,000 cartridges; the maximum figures are 50,000 and 5,000,000.

It has been a triumph for lying, and courage. The Orange Party and their English Tory allies, lied the Government into an abandonment of their precautionary move. The ships and the troops were withdrawn, and, under the cover of Mr. Bonar Law's "plot" motion, the coup was effected. The Government, or rather the Tory servants of the Government failed to detect a movement which involved the mobilization in Larne of six hundred motor cars from all parts of the North.

What is moral and what must be the reply? They can be stated very simply. The Government by its Arms Proclamation forbade Nationalist Ireland to undertake the task of defending itself. A corrupted army, a police and customs staff, at least hoodwinked at worst corrupted also, have shown in a sudden flash that the Government established in this country is not able to defend us.67

He went on to draw the obvious conclusion that under these circumstances the Nationalists of Ireland had a clear duty to defend themselves in the Irish Volunteers. A few days later Sir Roger Casement, in a letter to the same newspaper endorsed Professor Kettle's advice.68

Partition remained the key problem for Irish nationalists and after Larne it was obvious that the prospect of partition was more real than ever. John Redmond had supported the Government's policy of inaction over the gun-running, partly in order to avoid the creation of unionist martyrs to a cause.

67 28 April, 1914.
68 Freeman's Journal, 30 April, 1914.
Redmond as a long time participant in functions such as the annual Manchester Martyr's Commemoration knew the efficacy of that kind of propaganda weapon in Ireland and he preferred to allow the Ulster Volunteers to retain more tangible weapons. He was probably unaware of the military difficulties which were more likely to have deterred the Government from taking action than was his counsel. Some Cabinet Ministers were by now prepared to go further towards conciliating Ulster than the Prime Minister, and Winston Churchill, speaking in the House of Commons, implied that the Government desired Sir Edward Carson to state his full demand and that permanent exclusion for Ulster might well be granted. The news of this was greeted with predictable indignation in Ireland.\(^6^9\) Once again the Prime Minister was forced to repudiate statements bearing upon Ulster made by one of his colleagues.\(^7^0\) Opinion favouring the exclusion of Ulster as a compromise solution to the Irish Question was growing and the *Sunday Observer* which had opposed Home Rule declared in the first week of May that Home Rule outside Ulster had become inevitable but that Ulster must be excluded. In early May a meeting between Asquith, Bonar Law and Carson was announced. The *Cork Examiner* interpreted this as a sign of weakness on the part of the Unionists,\(^7^1\) but William O'Brien and Tim Healy warned that it was a sign that partition was in the offing.\(^7^2\)

\(^6^9\) *Cork Examiner*, 29 April, 1914.

\(^7^0\) Ibid., 30 April, 1914.

\(^7^1\) 7 May, 1914.

\(^7^2\) *Irish Weekly Independent*, 9 May, 1914.
The Irish Volunteer leaders, whose organization was expanding at a greatly accelerated rate following the Larne gun-running, tended to welcome the new developments. Eoin MacNeill, speaking at the inaugural meeting of a new Irish Volunteer branch in Drogheda, told his audience that:

The hereditary enemy of Ireland's freedom and prosperity, the old ruling class of Englishmen, in order that by dividing us they might rule us more easily, had called into existence a Volunteer force consisting of one section of Irishmen to fight against the freedom of Ireland. That was supposed to be a winning card, but it proved to be a losing card because by that trick they swept aside the last possibility of preventing Irishmen from organising their defence.73

Many in the Nationalist camp interpreted the lesson of Larne in a similar way and joined the Irish Volunteers quite convinced that the Government would not interfere. The Irish Volunteers also received further encouragement during May, 1914. On 12 May, the Prime Minister announced that he would introduce an Amending Bill to alter certain provisions of the Home Rule Bill then due for its final third reading. Apprehension as to the content of this amending legislation was immediately evident throughout Ireland. The _Cork Examiner's_ leading article on the subject revealed some of these fears as well as some of the frustration being felt by supporters of the Irish Party.

Unionists also realize that before an Amending Bill can be introduced the Home Rule Bill must virtually have become law otherwise there would be nothing to amend. The theory that a Liberal - Unionist combination may be formed to force the Nationalists to accept such amendments as may be evolved as a result of further

73 _Freeman's Journal_, 5 May, 1914.
"conversations" is too far-fetched to be probable - it would amount to forcing the views of the minority in Ireland on the majority - in other words, to coercing Nationalists who have adopted constitutional methods to yield to Orangemen, who have made treason and threats their chief instruments.74

Professor Kettle, writing from Newry, reiterated his call for support for the Volunteers.75 Another letter which was given considerable prominence at this time adopted a position corresponding fairly closely to that of the All-for-Ireland League - that Home Rule could be won and partition averted through conferences between prominent Irish representatives of all sides in the controversy. This letter was signed by Geo. F. H. Berkely, Roger Casement, Darell Figgis, Alice Stopford Green, Eoin MacNeill, Geo. W. Russell ("AE"), E. A. Stopford and Alex. Wilson.76 The letter does indicate that Eoin MacNeill's support for the Irish Party was wearing ever thinner and it reveals an unlikely affinity between a group sympathetic to Sinn Fein and William O'Brien's League. However, Eoin MacNeill's open identification with domestic opponents of the Irish Parliamentary Party coupled with the growing popularity of the Irish Volunteers was likely to reinforce the Party's desire to establish a measure of control over the movement.

MacNeill had been seeking for an expression of formal support for the Irish Volunteers from the Irish Parliamentary Party since the beginning of the year. John Redmond on the

74 13 May, 1914.
75 Freeman's Journal, 18 May, 1914.
76 Ibid., 20 May, 1914.
other hand was clearly reluctant to accord such support to an organization led by a group which included a number of known extremists unless he could assume control of the movement. Redmond's reluctance is hardly surprising in view of the presence among the prominent Volunteer leaders of men like Bulmer Hobson, Eamonn Ceannt and Patrick Pearse. Pearse may well still have seen himself as "a harmless literary nationalist" but in early 1914 he was saying and writing things which were unlikely to strike Redmond as harmless. What Pearse wrote "to the Boys of Ireland" urging them into Na Fianna Eirann so that they would be trained "to fight Ireland's battle when they are men", could be interpreted in a way which did not challenge the Irish Party position but his speeches in the United States in March were bound to appear disturbing from the Redmondite position. Pearse had been invited to address a number of meetings in and around New York to commemorate Robert Emmet. On 2 March in Brooklyn he said in the course of such an address:

The generation that is now growing old in Ireland has almost forgotten our heroes. We had learned the great art of parleying with our enemy and achieving nationhood by negotiation. The heroes had trodden hard and bloody ways: we should tread soft and flowering ways. The heroes had given up all things: we had learned a way of gaining all things, land and good living and the friendship of our foe. But the soil of Ireland, yea, the very stones of our cities have cried out against an infidelity that would barter an old tradition of nationhood even for a thing as precious as peace. This the heroes have done for us; for their spirits indwell in the place where they lived, and the hills of Ireland must be rent and her cities

Political Writings and Speeches, op. cit., p. 112.
levelled with the ground and all her children
driven out upon the seas of the world before
those voices are silenced that bid us be
faithful still and to make no peace with
England until Ireland is ours.\textsuperscript{78}

Referring specifically to the death of Robert Emmet he said
that it had been "a sacrifice Christ-like in its perfection"\textsuperscript{79}
and that Emmet himself "was faithful even unto the ignominy
of the gallows, dying that his people might live, even as
Christ died".\textsuperscript{80} Pearse then went on to speak of the Irish
Volunteers saying:

After all, there are in Ireland but two
parties: those who stand for the English
connection and those who stand against it.
On what side, think you, stand the Irish
Volunteers? I cannot speak for the Volunteers;
I am not authorized to say where they will use
their arms or when or how. I can speak only
for myself; and it is strictly a personal per-
ception that I am recording, but a perception
that to me is very clear, when I say that before
this generation has passed the Volunteers will
draw the sword of Ireland. There is no truth
but the old trust and no way but the old way.
Home Rule may come or may not come, but under
Home Rule or in its absence there remains for
the Volunteers and for Ireland the substantial
business of achieving Irish nationhood. And I
do not know how nationhood is achieved except
by armed men, I do not know how nationhood is
guarded except by armed men.\textsuperscript{81}

The following week he spoke on much the same topic in New
York City itself and once again alluded to the need for the
sacrifice of one good man to redeem Ireland.\textsuperscript{82} His speech

\textsuperscript{78}Ibid., pp. 65-67.
\textsuperscript{79}Ibid., p. 69.
\textsuperscript{80}Ibid., p. 71.
\textsuperscript{81}Ibid., pp. 74-75.
\textsuperscript{82}Ibid., p. 76.
on this occasion contained allusions to the immortal quality of the Irish national spirit alternating with predictions of its imminent demise but the dominant theme was hatred of England. At a time when Redmond was forecasting that Home Rule would bring peace between England and Ireland Pearse's addresses were unlikely to be welcomed by Irish Party faithful. Pearse did refer to the prospect of peace between England and Ireland saying:

"So when England talks of peace we know our answer: "Peace with you! Peace while your one hand is at our throat and your other hand is in our pocket? Peace with a footpad? Peace with a pickpocket? Peace with the leech that is sucking our body dry of blood? Peace with the many armed monster whose tentacles envelop us while its system emits an inky fluid that shrouds its work of murder from the eyes of men? The time has not yet come to talk of peace."

It is understandable that Redmond should wish to minimize the influence of such men in any organization to which he lent his support. In May an attempt was made to gain control of the supposedly democratic organization from the ground up and members of the Ancient Order of Hibernians were directed to join branches of the Irish Volunteers in sufficient numbers to gain control of specific branches. The Provisional Committee refused group memberships and redistributed individual recruits between branches so as to prevent control being achieved in this manner.

At this time the strength of the Volunteers was estimated

83 Ibid., pp. 77-78.
84 Marcus Bourke, The O'Rahilly, op. cit., pp. 77 ff.
at 45,000. It was clear that the movement was well
established and had Redmond moved to attack it he could not
have completely destroyed it. He was also convinced that
the Ulster Volunteers had made a strong impression on British
opinion and that force provided tangible evidence of the
value of a disciplined para-military organization both as a
propaganda weapon and as a means of maintaining control among
supporters. For all that has been said about the Ulster
Volunteers there can be no doubt that Sir Edward Carson was
able to prevent a considerable amount of anomic individual
violence directed at Roman Catholics because of the military
order and discipline maintained among his followers. Massive
intimidation did take place but it occurred in spite of
rather than because of the existence of the Ulster Volunteer
Force. When things tended to go too far Sir Edward was able
to check some of the expression of hostility as he did for
example in Omagh by having the following notice affixed to
hoardings throughout the town:

IMPORTANT NOTICE

As rumours have been sedulously circulated to
the effect that the Ulster Volunteer Force has
been organized with an object hostile to those
of our fellow-countrymen in Ulster who differ
from us, I desire that it should be made plain
on all occasions that the sole object of the
Ulster Volunteer Force is to make it impossible
for the Government to compel us to submit to a
Home Rule Parliament in Dublin.

Our quarrel is with the Government alone, and
we desire that the religious and political views
of our opponents should be everywhere respected.

We fight for equal justice for all under the Government of the United Kingdom.

24 February 1914 Edward Carson

He would again return to the same subject on the 12th July when, speaking in Larne, he said:

You have not been organized and trained for the purpose of fighting your fellow citizens who may differ from you in creed, in politics. It is not against them you have been organized. We look upon them as fellow-countrymen and fellow-citizens, and we wish for them every privilege and every safeguard for civil and religious liberty just as we had for ourselves; we are not out for any aggression; we are out for defence only and we are organized not to fight those who differ from us.

There were thus a number of considerations impelling Redmond to establish some measure of control over the Irish Volunteers. The resistance of MacNeill to a take-over of the Volunteers was offensive to Redmond who was accustomed to a readier response to his demands on the part of those who professed to be his supporters. It was evident to the parliamentary leaders that the Volunteers, unlike the Gaelic League, could not be non-political and for Redmond, engaged in carrying out a struggle at Westminster, non-political could only refer to neutrality between Nationalists and Unionists, a position which the Gaelic League had maintained with ever decreasing success throughout the years. Within this frame of reference the Irish Volunteers were pro-Home Rule and anti-Union, therefore, Redmondites could argue with


87*Cork Examiner*, 13 July, 1914.
a measure of plausibility that they ought to come under the control of the men chosen by Ireland to lead the fight for Home Rule. The difficulty with this position arose, however, within the more limited framework of the nationalist camp. "Non-political" had acquired a new meaning even in the Gaelic League whereby what was meant was neutrality between nationalist factions. Sinn Fein and the Irish Republican Brotherhood were opponents of Redmond and they controlled the Irish Volunteers, though the bulk of the rank and file membership were Redmondites. Within this context "non-political" was interpreted in a different sense from that which the expression had from a Westminster perspective. Antagonisms within the Nationalist camp had grown more acute with the increasing probability of a partitionist settlement of the Irish question and the combined forces of the various separatist groups with the All-for-Ireland group, though still very much a minority, did threaten to restrict the Irish Party's freedom to negotiate and particularly if the Irish Volunteers took a strongly anti-partitionist stand. Victory was too close for Redmond to endanger Home Rule by tolerating dissensions in his own home territory if this could be avoided.

The Home Rule Bill was in fact accorded its third reading by the House of Commons though only by a majority of seventy-seven.\(^{88}\) John Redmond immediately issued a press statement declaring that:

\(^{88}\) *Freeman's Journal, 26 May, 1914.*
The great thing for us to remember is that Amending Bill or no Amending Bill the Home Rule Bill is now practically an Act of Parliament.

I see no likelihood whatever of an early General Election, but general election or no general election, the return once more of the Liberal Party to power, or the return - most unlikely - of the Tory Party to power, the Union of Pitt and Castlereagh can never be again set up on its feet, and the assembling of an Irish Parliament, under the provisions of the Home Rule Bill is as certain as the rising of tomorrow's sun. 89

William O'Brien might denounce Asquith for not killing Home Rule outright and say that no Home Rule was better than Home Rule with partition. He could blame the Irish Party for its refusal to make any genuine concessions to Ulster but it is difficult to see what possible concessions would have gained the consent of Ulster unionists to a Dublin Parliament. On the whole, however, the passage of the Bill was greeted with rejoicings and Irish Volunteers paraded in amity with the Ancient Order of Hibernians, tar barrels were set alight and cheers rang out throughout the south of Ireland. 90 A cautionary note was struck by Stephen Gwynn, a prominent leader of the Irish Party, advising the supporters of the Party in Ireland to support the Irish Volunteers.

We decided today that any member of the Party who desired to do so, as most do, and as I do, most warmly, should advise the strong taking up of the Volunteers movement. We have to-day virtually put Home Rule on the Statute Book, but

89 Ibid.

90 Ibid., 27 May, 1914.
it may be taken off unless we are prepared to assert our determination by the same means as the Ulstermen. It is not by demonstrations but by drilling that Ireland has now to show that her people claim the right to govern themselves.\textsuperscript{91}

From this moment on Members of Parliament began attending Volunteer demonstrations and William Redmond even enrolled as a private in the Ennis detachment.\textsuperscript{92}

The enthusiasm displayed by the various local Volunteer units for the Irish Parliamentary Party was perceived as a threat by the Provisional Committee and the following General Order was issued by the Volunteer headquarters:

\begin{quote}
Irish Volunteers, acting as such, shall not take part in any political movement, or participate in any local government or Parliamentary election, or in any demonstration of sectional or political character.\textsuperscript{93}
\end{quote}

Open support for the Irish Volunteers by leaders of the Irish Parliamentary Party did boost recruiting and four thousand joined in one single day.\textsuperscript{94} Redmond's hand was further strengthened by the results of elections for the Cork County Council and the Cork Rural District Council which showed a significant swing away from William O'Brien and towards Redmond.\textsuperscript{95} On 9 June, 1914, the \textit{Irish Times} predicted that Redmond was about to take over the Volunteer movement. This announcement in a unionist newspaper was for many members of the Provisional

\textsuperscript{91}\textit{Cork Examiner}, 29 May, 1914.
\textsuperscript{92}\textit{Ibid.}, 2 June, 1914.
\textsuperscript{93}\textit{Freeman's Journal}, 3 June, 1914.
\textsuperscript{94}\textit{Irish Weekly Independent}, 30 May, 1914.
\textsuperscript{95}\textit{Cork Examiner}, 8 June, 1914.
Committee of the Irish Volunteers the first indication of such a move. MacNeill had been negotiating with Redmond and Dillon but had not seen fit to inform his colleagues.

One legitimate criticism which could be made of the Irish Volunteers was that they had so far failed to live up to their democratic pretensions. The Provisional Committee, which had ostensibly been set up only in order to accomplish the initial organization of the movement and had been expected to quickly pass on control to elected representatives from local units, was still in power and was showing itself jealous of local initiatives. This is not surprising given the fact that such elections would have put an end to the Irish Republican Brotherhood's control over the movement but it ran counter to the intentions announced at the inauguration of the Volunteers. Redmond used the unrepresentative character of the Volunteer leadership to argue that he, whose representative character was clear, ought to be permitted to nominate a sufficient number of additional members to the Provisional Committee to make it more representative of the will of the Irish people. Faced with this demand the Provisional Committee immediately issued a General Order calling on each company of Volunteers to elect a delegate to county conventions which would in turn elect a member to the Provisional Committee. 96

Professor Kettle as a member of the Provisional Committee

96 Freeman's Journal, 11 June, 1914.
wrote to the newspapers sharply criticizing the response of the Committee to the Redmond proposal. In his letter he protested against "the indecently rash haste with which the decision of the committee was reached". He pointed out that several members of the committee had not been informed of the meeting at which the decision had been taken and he demanded a meeting of the full committee. He went on to say:

As a member of the committee I say further that in my judgement Mr. Redmond's plan was wise and workable at all points, and that it ought to be accepted by anybody who values the future of the Volunteer movement. It laid a basis for the concentration of the whole strength of Ireland on the goal of self government. The Irish Party offered the Volunteers invaluable help. The Volunteers stood as a guarantee that justice would not be overborne by force. To raise a quarrel between them is a piece of work of which no Irishman can have reason to be proud.97

Redmond's reply to the Provisional Committee's manoeuvre was a threat to set up a new force of his own. This new force would presumably have had an even more disastrous effect upon the Irish Volunteers than their formation had had on the Irish Citizen Army.

The nationalist press, with the exception of journals clearly identified with Sinn Fein and the extremists, backed Redmond's stand as did Dr. Healy, The Roman Catholic Archbishop of Tuam.98 Most significantly, however, local Volunteer units, such as the one in Carlow immediately expressed their full support for Redmond.99 The Irish Times greeted with

97Cork Examiner, 12 June, 1914.
98Irish Weekly Independent, 13 June, 1914.
99Ibid.
some satisfaction the disarray in nationalist ranks. Yet Patrick Pearse did sit on an overwhelmingly pro-Redmond platform at the inaugural meeting of the Dundrum Corps of the Irish Volunteers. His address to the new corps while obviously not designed to please the Redmondites was not hostile and the only remarks which he made and which might be interpreted as critical occurred when he said that "the Volunteers were not confined to any section; they belonged to Ireland and Parliamentarians, Sinn Feiners, Separatists and every Irishman who subscribed to the principles of Irish nationhood were welcome in its ranks".

On 16 June, 1914, the Provisional Committee met to consider Redmond's ultimatum amid reports that the rank and file membership of the Volunteers was increasingly expressing support for the Irish Party stand. Another Roman Catholic Archbishop, Dr. Harty of Cashel and Emly, had endorsed Redmond's stand and while the Provisional Committee was sharply divided, the loyalties of the membership were not in doubt. In the end the Provisional Committee reluctantly capitulated to the pressures from the Irish Party and from the ranks of its organization and Redmond's proposal to enlarge the Provisional Committee by twenty-five of his nominees was accepted. Eoin MacNeill wrote an amplification of the Provisional Committee's decision which gave due recognition to the pressure of public opinion. MacNeill wrote:

13 June, 1914.

Freeman's Journal, 15 June, 1914.
The statement issued by the Provisional Committee of the Irish Volunteers at the meeting occupied the Committee to a late hour. As chairman, I was requested to supplement the statement with something specially addressed to the members of the Irish Volunteer Corps.

The decision of the Committee was adopted in deference to a considerable body of Irish opinion manifested both within and outside of the Volunteer organization, and in the belief that, in the absence of such a decision, both National unity and the unity and discipline of the Volunteers themselves would have been gravely and permanently imperiled.

The Volunteers are asked to recognize that without unity and discipline they cannot hope to realize their purpose of becoming Ireland's National Army of defense. It is certain that a very large proportion of them, apart altogether from their individual views on matters of party politics, and judging the question purely from the Irish Volunteer standpoint, must greatly regret that such a situation should ever have arisen. Many others will doubtless hold quite a different view. Differences of opinion must not be allowed to interfere with disciplinary unity to any degree. Discussions and dissentions, fomented from outside, broke up the Irish Volunteers of a former time and brought about the long eclipse of our national liberty, and our national unity.

The decision to accept Redmond's terms had been reached by a vote of eighteen to nine. Eight of the nine opponents of the decision also issued a statement to the press that:

We, the undersigned members of the Provisional Committee of the Irish Volunteers, who opposed the decision arrived at by a majority of the Committee on Tuesday night, on the grounds that it was a violation of the basic principles which, up to the present, have carried the Irish Volunteer movement to success, at the same time feel it our duty to continue our work in the movement; and we appeal to those of the rank and file who are in agreement with us on this point to sink their personal feelings and persist in their efforts to make the Irish Volunteers an efficient, armed, National Defence Force.

- Eamonn Ceannt, M.J. Judge, Con O Colbaird, John Fitzgibbon, Eamon Martin, P.H. Pearse, Sean MacDiarmada,

103 Ibid., 18 June, 1914.
104 Marcus Bourke: The O'Rahilly, op. cit., p. 80.
Pearas Beaslai.  

The signatories of this declaration obviously did not subscribe to the principle of majority rule and, since the majority of the Volunteer membership was clearly in support of Redmond's proposal, for Patrick Pearse to sign the minority statement was a repudiation of what he had written in the last of the "From A Heritage" series of articles. Then he had declared:

... in this Volunteer movement, as I understand it, the people are to be master; and it will be for the people to say where and against whom the Volunteers shall draw the sword and point the rifle. Now, my reading of Irish history is that, however the leaders may have failed, the instinct of the people has always been unerring. The Volunteers themselves, the people themselves, must keep control of this movement. Any man or group of men that seeks to establish an ascendancy should be dealt with summarily: such traitors to the Volunteer spirit would deserve to be shot, but it will be sufficient if they be shot out.  

Pearse had by June become a leading member of precisely such a group attempting to consolidate its ascendancy over the Irish Volunteers and thwart the will of the Volunteers and of the people of Ireland. Desmond FitzGerald, himself an extreme nationalist, has testified that the bulk of the Irish Volunteers conceived of their movement as a political argument to counter the similar gesture in the North of Ireland.  

Another surge of recruits enlisted in the Irish Volunteers

following Redmond's take-over and on Sunday 28 June alone twenty new units were formed. Augustine Birrell soon released figures indicating that according to police estimates the Ulster Volunteers numbered 85,000 and the Irish Volunteers 132,000 including 28,000 reservists. The fate of these reservists who joined the Irish Volunteers in the surge of enthusiasm which swept Ireland with the third reading of the Home Rule Bill and Redmond's take-over was being decided on the European continent. The Archduke Franz Ferdinand was assassinated while the Volunteers were changing their complexion and a war between England and Germany now seemed probable. One member of the Irish Republican Brotherhood has written that the Brotherhood welcomed the prospect of such a war -

It had long been taken for granted in our circle that a war was inevitable, and that that war would be between England and Germany. And we talked of a rising in arms when that war should take place. But we presumed more than the war. We took it for granted that in such a war the Irish people would necessarily be sympathetic with the side opposed to England, and we presumed also that side would probably be victorious.

The ideological gulf separating those who shared these sentiments and the reservists was bound to deepen and to create tensions within the Irish Volunteer movement, tensions which did not arise within the Ulster Volunteer Force. These

108 Freeman's Journal, 1 July, 1914.
109 Ibid., 10 July, 1914.
110 Memoirs of Desmond FitzGerald, op. cit., p. 32.
tensions were eventually to split the Irish Volunteer movement but there is evidence that even before the split tensions were felt within the governing body of the movement. Piaras Beaslai has given an account of one meeting where J. D. Nugent, one of the Redmondite members who was also General Secretary of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, called Patrick Pearse a "liar", a "contemptible cur" and knocked him to the ground. Beaslai adds that the "Sinn Feiners" acted defensively even after a priest produced a revolver and threatened Eamonn Ceannt. The account of the same incident reconstructed from the O'Rahilly's notes, however, places the revolver in Eamonn Ceannt's hands.

The incident may be related to the fact that Pearse was at this time conspiring behind the backs of his colleagues as shown by the letter which he wrote to Joe McGarrity in the United States on 17 July, 1914. He then made a request for arms which he desired to take precedence over similar requests forwarded by Eoin MacNeill and he told McGarrity:

Now here is the situation, the Unionists are armed. The Redmondites are rapidly arming. The Nationalists (Sinn Feiners and Separatists) remain unarmed. It will be an irony of ironies if this movement comes and goes and leaves us - The physical force men! - The only unarmed group, in the country. And this is the intention of those at the head of affairs. Arms are to be prevented from reaching those whom Redmond cannot control. On Tuesday night, (without notice) they carried a resolution appointing a Standing Committee which is practically to take

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112 Marcus Bourke, The O'Rahilly, op. cit., p. 84.
charge of the movement - the full Provisional Committee is to meet only once a month. The following are of the Standing Committee: Burke, Donovan, Fitzgibbon, Hobson, Judge, Meredith, Nugent, Fr. O'Hare, Walsh, MacNeill, L. Kettle, Gore, O'Rahilly. Of these 13, only Hobson and Fitzgibbon can be absolutely relied on; Judge (tho' a Hibernian) I believe sound and courageous; MacNeill and O'Rahilly are honest but weak, and frightfully subject to panic. The rest will do exactly as Redmond tells them. At most we can count on only 5 out of the 13 who now rule the Volunteers; but possibly only 2 or 3.

Pearse had not objected to meetings and resolutions without notice when it had been a matter of keeping Redmond at bay but he found it objectionable when directed at his group. It is clear that he entertained in 1914 plans for the Irish Volunteers which were strange ones for a literary nationalist. For John Redmond, achieving control over the Irish Volunteers was a victory, but he did not take full advantage of it, the men he appointed to the Provisional Committee did not reduce the preponderance of Dubliners which he had used as an argument for demanding control and on the whole they tended to treat this appointment as an honourable reward for past political services rather than as an onerous task. The military staff positions remained in the hands of extremists as did the officer corps. Had Redmond's nominees vigorously asserted their control over the movement, the old Provisional Committee, when the split came, would have been left with no more than a handful of followers probably not enough to

sustain the claim of being a national organization. This was an instance of the arrogance of the Redmondites which led them to underestimate their domestic foes. By 1914 it was clear that they had grievously underestimated the Ulster unionists; now they were underestimating what they called Sinn Fein - a term which they used to designate all those who took a more extreme national position than theirs. The take-over of the Irish Volunteers by Redmond has been described as "a sign not of strength but of weakness"\(^{114}\). Redmond knew that distasteful compromises would have to be made and if he needed to prevent criticism at home he needed to establish more than nominal control over the movement.

The Irish Parliamentary Party was perhaps too preoccupied with difficulties at Westminster to consolidate control over the Volunteers. The Amending Bill with its six years exclusion proposal for part of Ulster was getting bogged down. The Irish Party certainly did not favour it and had only accepted its principle for the sake of peace in Ireland. The Unionists, however, for whose sake the Bill had been drafted vowed to oppose it with force if necessary. At this critical juncture the King intervened and called the Buckingham Palace Conference, to be chaired by the Speaker of the House of Commons, to endeavour to unravel the Home Rule tangle. By 1914 British politicians were pretty well in agreement that exclusion in

\(^{114}\) Nicholas Mansergh, "John Redmond", op. cit., p. 46.
some form represented the only solution to the Irish Question. British political opinion has been described in the following terms.

The second challenge to the government came from Ireland when the threat of a Home Rule Bill, carried with the aid of the newly enacted limitation of the veto of the upper house, inflamed the passions of the Ulster Protestants. Like the Turks in Cyprus today, they abhored the prospect of being ruled by the Catholic majority in the island. Their most popular alogans were "Ulster will fight and Ulster will be right" and "Home Rule is Rome Rule". All of us in and out of parliament fully understood their attitude and it was the general wish to exclude Ulster from the coming Home Rule Bill. Unfortunately this obvious piece of justice was impracticable owing to the sturdy resistance of the Irish Party in the House of Commons and Southern Ireland, for Asquith could not have forced a bill on the statute book without the support of the Irish Nationalist votes in the House of Commons. It was a cruel dilemma for the Liberal Party and at the time there seemed no way out. The Ulster Unionists, fearing the worst, were prepared to employ any means of averting the threatened blow; the opposition reached a climax in the threatened mutiny at the Curragh Camp. Here again the war intervened and rendered any further immediate procedure with the Home Rule Bill impossible.115

The Buckingham Palace Conference resulted in the postponement of debate on the Amending Bill but there was considerable uneasiness among Irish Nationalists about the possibility of further concessions being extracted behind closed doors. One Irish Party M.P., Lawrence Ginnell expressed the fear that the Conference might turn into a "Conspiracy to defeat the decisions of this House",116 showing a diminishing confidence in the ability of the Party leaders to defend their


gains. The Conference, however, failed to find a compromise solution because no agreement could be reached on the area which was to be excluded from the operation of the Home Rule Bill.

Augustine Birrell, speaking for a Government still confronted by its Irish problem, might reaffirm the determination to use force if necessary to implement Home Rule but the re-assuring power of such words was no longer what it had once been and it did not remove the apprehension which was beginning to grip Ireland. Irishmen continued to join the Irish Volunteers in large numbers as this appeared to be one method of relieving the tensions which the uncertainty surrounding the fate of Home Rule was generating. Patrick Pearse, the principal speaker at a Galway recruiting meeting for the Irish Volunteers, said that:

Mr. Redmond had adopted the programme of the Volunteers and that their object was to make sure that the Home Rule Bill became law, that no further concessions be made to Orangemen or the English Tories, to see that Ireland was not permanently dismembered, and to make Home Rule the nucleus of further developments of national freedom. Ulster had armed and organized with the connivance of the Liberal Government for two and a half years; and that same Government could not now interfere with the formation of the National Volunteers.

On the last Saturday in July five thousand Ulster Volunteers marched through Belfast displaying their newly acquired weapons and the authorities made no move to interfere. That parade set the tone for the next scene then being prepared.
in Dublin.

The Irish Volunteers' answer to the Larne gun-running was the landing of guns at Howth on Sunday, 26 July, 1914, and at Kilcoole a few days later. This gun-running was not an Irish Republican Brotherhood initiative and while one of the main figures involved was Bulmer Hobson, his vote in favour of accepting Redmond's nominees to the Provisional Committee of the Irish Volunteers had led to his resignation from the Supreme Council of the Brotherhood. Neither was it a Redmondite plot, Redmond's nominal control of the Volunteers had not made him privy to such operations. The main planners with the exception of Bulmer Hobson, were romantically inclined Anglo-Irishmen who had been led into this escapade on the high seas from Mrs. Green's salon. It was they, rather than the Clan na Gael correspondents of the extremists, who provided the weapons which would make the rising of 1916 possible. The Howth landing unlike that at Larne was carried out in broad daylight and within walking distance of Dublin. The arms instead of being spirited away covertly were shouldered and flaunted by Volunteers returning to Dublin in parade order and high spirits. One of the participants described the effects of receiving the weapons in the following terms.

On the individuals who participated in the reception of the arms so daringly brought them the mere receiving and carrying of a rifle had an effect that one might describe as exalting. The possession of arms in company with men who possessed arms and exercised with them permitted one to think of oneself as a professional soldier, and this at a time when the profession of arms had something of romantic interest. To those who formed
the Volunteers this feeling was enhanced by a
certain exultation. The bulk of Irish people
had been denied the use of arms except in a
service which they regarded as a sort of apostasy.
Their dream had been to act as soldiers of a nation
which was, in Arthur Griffith's phrase, "following
the laws of its own being". The present writer
was fortunate enough to have been present at the
landing of the rifles on that forenoon in July 1914.
As they were handed up, the packing straw stripped
off them, as each along the quay side handled and
passed the rifle down the chain of Volunteers, a
thrill went through each man of them. A barrier
had been broken down. A part of the conquest had
been undone.\textsuperscript{119}

The psychological effects of possessing weapons referred to
here has long been recognized. In the \textit{Ramayana}, a work of
ancient India, the princess Sita is made say that "the very
bearing of weapons changeth the mind of those that carry
them" and this has been confirmed by modern research which
indicates that the potential for violence in any situation
of tension is greatly increased by the availability of weapons.\textsuperscript{120}

The news that weapons were being landed at Howth harbour
reached The Assistant Commissioner of the Dublin Metropolitan
Police, William Harrel. According to rumours current in Dublin
at the time Mr. Harrel was expected to succeed Sir Neville
Chamberlain as Inspector-General of the Royal Irish Constabulary.\textsuperscript{121}

He immediately prepared to take energetic action without making
any strenuous efforts to consult Sir James Doherty, the Under-
Secretary. He did, however, approach General Cuthbert and

\textsuperscript{119}Padraic Colum, \textit{Arthur Griffith}, op. cit., p. 127.

\textsuperscript{120}See Leonard Berkowitz and Anthony LePage: "Weapons as
Aggression - Eliciting Stimuli": \textit{Journal of Personality and

\textsuperscript{121}\textit{Freeman's Journal}, 7 April, 1914.
obtained a detachment of one hundred and sixty men from the King's Own Scottish Borderers to provide him with armed support, the Dublin Metropolitan Police, unlike the Royal Irish Constabulary, being an unarmed force. The marching Volunteers were met head on in Clontarf and in a confrontation worthy of the "Carry-On" gang, the Volunteers disbanded from the rear and one by one, taking virtually all their weapons, went home. Some of them did try to provoke the soldiers into a massacre then and there but Bulmer Hobson, foreseeing the possibility of a confrontation had arranged for a separate detachment of the Fianna under Sean Heuston to carry the ammunition. The hotheads, among whom Eamonn Ceannt was prominent, had only a few small arms with which they managed to wound one soldier before Hobson was able to suppress the firing. One Volunteer, Michael Judge, was bayonetted, though not fatally, and fortunately for the Volunteers the soldiers did not realize that the shots fired at them had come from their ranks.122 Eighteen policemen had refused to interfere with the Volunteers on the ground that the Ulster Volunteers had not been interfered with either at Larne or on their Belfast parade the previous day. The experience was humiliating, for the police and for the military. Mr. Harrel's bluff had been called. He had evidently hoped to intimidate the Volunteers into surrendering their arms. Without authorization from his political superiors he was unwilling to use sufficient

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force to disarm the Volunteers which would certainly have involved substantial loss of life.

Following this inglorious performance the King's Own Scottish Borderers marched back to Dublin and they were jeered by crowds of Dubliners. At various points along the way the jeers were accompanied by stones, bottles and bananas. Later testimony as to the size and number of stones varied considerably with the end of the process at which the witness had been, but evidently the soldiers were subject to a great deal of verbal abuse and to some physical abuse on their way back into the city. On a number of occasions along their route back to barracks they jabbed their bayonets at their tormentors, and two of the thirty-five civilians wounded that day sustained bayonet wounds. According to military testimony twenty soldiers suffered injuries, seven had to be hospitalized, one of them for ten days. What transformed the day's events into tragedy occurred on Bachelor's Walk when the senior officer, who had only joined the column on its way back from Clontarf and was unaware that rifles had been loaded, ordered a number of soldiers to take aim with a view to frightening the crowd. The officer later testified that he had given no order to fire but some of the soldiers, perhaps confused by the cries and shouts of the crowd thought that the order had been given and opened fire. No soldier fired more than two rounds and most of the bullet wounds sustained by civilians were leg wounds indicating the soldiers had fired low. One
of the victims, Michael McGrath, who was treated for a leg wound immediately after the shooting was found to have pellets imbedded in his leg, not a wound usually associated with a bullet from a Lee-Enfield. But the tragedy was that three civilians died.\textsuperscript{123}

Initial press reports of the Bachelor's Walk shooting were highly sensational. The \textit{Freeman's Journal} treated it as an instance of wanton shooting by the military.\textsuperscript{124} The \textit{Cork Examiner} reported soldiers firing volleys into the ranks of Volunteers and making wild bayonet charges.\textsuperscript{125} These exaggerated accounts helped to fuel the indignation being felt throughout nationalist Ireland. The \textit{Cork Irish Volunteers} paraded in protest.\textsuperscript{126} The Lord Mayor of Dublin called for murder indictments against the soldiers.\textsuperscript{127} The \textit{Oireachtas} of the Gaelic League meeting in Kilkenny adopted a resolution protesting against "the murders committed in the streets of Dublin yesterday by England's soldiery".\textsuperscript{128} Resolutions condemning the King's Own Scottish Borderers and the entire Irish administration poured in from all the usual bodies.

\textsuperscript{123}Cd 7631 \textit{Royal Commission into the Circumstances Connected with the Landing of Arms at Howth on July 26th, 1914 - Report and Cd 7649 \textit{Royal Commission into the Circumstances Connected with the Landing of Arms at Howth on July 26th, 1914 - Minutes of Evidence} (H.M.S.O., London, 1914.)

\textsuperscript{124}27 July, 1914.

\textsuperscript{125}27 July, 1914.

\textsuperscript{126}\textit{Cork Examiner}, 27 July, 1914.

\textsuperscript{127}\textit{Freeman's Journal}, 28 July, 1914.

Throughout most of these was manifest a great deal of indignation at the fact that Ulster Volunteers were being allowed to get away with activities which were not being permitted to the Irish Volunteers. Recruiting for the Irish Volunteers was greatly stimulated by the Bachelor's Walk shooting and perhaps more so by the added glamour conferred upon the movement by the possession of arms. Bodies such as the Christian Brothers Past Pupils Union of Strand Street passed resolutions urging their members to join the Volunteers. The three dead victims of the shooting were given a public funeral attended by Volunteers proudly bearing their newly acquired weapons. The cheering of the crowd may not have been quite appropriate to a funeral but it represented a renewed enthusiasm of the Volunteers. As Denis Gwynn described the public mood:

An immense impetus was given to the Irish Volunteers by the gun-running at Howth. Hitherto the prospect of arming had been so remote that many had held back. Now the sanguinary events of Sunday had proved that arms could be got. In self-respect every young Nationalist felt compelled to enroll in the movement which had been attacked by Dublin Castle while the Ulster Volunteers were arming with impunity.

Their temper was rising fast, and the excitement of drilling and of expecting arms created a very different attitude of mind from that which had supported Redmond for years past. Ulster had succeeded in imposing her own terms upon the Government by using methods which, it was believed, might have been equally successful if Redmond had adopted them. Now, at last, there was a general determination that further concessions must be

130 Ibid., 30 July, 1914.
absolutely resisted. A sudden revulsion of feeling against the Liberal Government, and the Home Rule Bill itself, was spreading widely. Under the Bill the Volunteers would still be an illegal organization, and they had no intention now of disbanding. Many of the younger men were beginning to ask whether it would not be better to reject all concessions at once if the Home Rule Bill could not be carried without accepting them; and to face a new period of opposition with the fresh courage inspired by the possession of arms and a military organization. Redmond was unaware of how far and how deeply this feeling of exasperation extended in the unconstitutional movement over which he had reluctantly assumed control.\textsuperscript{131}

Extremist influence over the Volunteer movement was thus seen to be hardening attitudes and the euphoria of the now armed Volunteers coupled with the outrage and indignation felt at the shootings made it impossible at that moment for Redmond to make any further concessions on the Amending Bill. Temporary exclusion to which he had agreed was simply not sufficient to win agreement from either the Ulster Unionists or the constantly growing ranks of their English sympathizers. The tension and instability evident in Ireland led to the postponement of consideration of the Amending Bill.

The extremists rather ghoulishly welcomed the shooting in Bachelors' Walk. Sean MacDiarmada wrote to John Daly in Limerick that, "It will do good. This ought to open the eyes of the fools as to what the Liberal Government is".\textsuperscript{132} Patrick Pearse, writing again to Joe McGarrity, gave a somewhat embellished account of what had occurred.

The stirring events of Sunday will redound

\textsuperscript{131}The Life of John Redmond, op. cit., pp. 322-323.
\textsuperscript{132}F.X. Martin, ed., The Howth Gun-Running and the Kilcoole Gun-Running 1914, op. cit., p. 163.
enormously to the advantage of the movement. The discipline of the Volunteers was splendid. The soldiers ran before them. There has been nothing like it since 1798. The brutal murders of the unarmed crowd by the soldiers who an hour previously had run from the Volunteers have given public sentiment just that turn that was desirable. The army is an object of odium and derision and the Volunteers are the heroes of the hour. The whole movement, the whole country has been rebaptized by blood shed for the land.133

The victims of Bachelors' Walk became martyrs and as such powerful propaganda weapons. Press references to "Sunday's Holocaust" almost a week after the event kept the flames of resentment burning.134 Soldiers and officers in uniform were attacked in the streets and roughly handled by the crowd. All military band engagements had to be cancelled. The separatist myth that the British Army in Ireland was an army of occupation seemed in the process of becoming accepted by the people.

Unionists viewed the events connected with the Howth gun-running somewhat differently. Sir Henry Robinson who viewed the situation from within the administration deplored the dismissal of William Harrel from his post as Assistant Commissioner of the Dublin Metropolitan Police as a result of his abortive attempt to confiscate the weapons of the Irish Volunteers and he wrote:

Harrel had acted to the best of his judgement and discretion upon a difficult and critical occasion, but he was sacrificed to popular clamour in circumstances which shook the confidence of the R.I.C. in the Government to its very foundations, and which

133 Ibid., pp. 167-168.
134 Irish Weekly Independent, 1 August, 1914.
had far reaching results. The police perceiving that the Government was dominated by the Nationalist and Labour parties, and that they could not be sure of its support in emergencies and would be made scapegoats, completely lost heart, and every officer in the force realized that if he got into conflict with political movements he imperiled his position; so with this feeling of nervousness and insecurity prevailing in the police force, the Sinn Fein movement was nourished and took firm root, and they continued their operations under the eyes of the police.135

The Royal Commission whose report led to the dismissal of William Harrel found that he had acted illegally in attempting to seize the rifles landed at Howth and in calling upon the military for assistance. What was bound to be irritating to the unionists was that this conclusion was based on the technical ground that the Customs Act for Ireland conferred powers only on the Royal Irish Constabulary and not on the Dublin Metropolitan Police. It appears that it would have been quite in order for the Customs service to call on the Royal Irish Constabulary for help and for that body in turn to request the assistance of the military.136 The Royal Commission did, however, report that it had considered another possible ground for contention but that its decision that the police action had been illegal was not based upon it. That ground was that of possible discrimination between "localities or classes". The Commissioners wrote:

To take the instance in hand - if through the action of the Executive Government a discrimination had been made under which the seizure of arms had

135Memories: Wise and Otherwise, op. cit., p. 221

136Cd. 7631, op. cit., p. 12.
been forbidden in Belfast and ordered in Dublin, or if in the one possession and parade of contraband arms had been allowed, and in the other interdicted and treated as a crime by the Government of the day - we should not have hesitated to connect the unfortunate and mischievous results with the unfortunate and mischievous cause. But we have not before us any evidence which gives countenance to the idea of partial discrimination in the orders or procedures of Your Majesty's Government or Your Majesty's Viceroy. The Customs Statutes applied to all Irish subjects.\textsuperscript{137}

Bulmer Hobson in planning the daylight operation had apparently anticipated the action of the authorities and he later commented:

\textit{While I expected that the authorities in Dublin Castle would attempt to prevent the landing of rifles, I knew that the Liberal Government in England, having already remained inactive on the occasion of the Carsonite gun-running at Larne, would find it very embarrassing to take active measures against us.}\textsuperscript{138}

From the British Government's point of view the Howth gun-running and its aftermath was a disaster. Another illegal army now had weapons, the people had become convinced that the administration had discriminated against them, notwithstanding the conclusions of the Royal Commission. It had lost the services of the two top men in the Dublin Metropolitan Police and further demoralized both police forces in Ireland and much of the civil administration. A strong wave of resentment against the army had been provoked at a time when the European situation was highly unstable and

\textsuperscript{137} Ibid., p. 13.
\textsuperscript{138} "Foundation and Growth of the Irish Volunteers, 1913-14", op. cit., p. 37.
menacing. The intransigence of Redmond's followers had been stiffened to such an extent that Home Rule was now in jeopardy and the Government had been exposed in all its ineffectiveness and vacillating ineptitude.

It was the European situation which defused the potentially explosive tensions developing in Ireland. On 2 August, 1914, France was invaded by the Kaiser's army and Britain decided to mobilize. Overnight the mood of Ireland changed, to the dismay of the extremists. There was one attempt by reservists in Londonderry to pressure the Government into giving the Home Rule Bill Royal Assent. By the time Redmond received this telegram offering to refuse the call to the colours he had already made his famous offer to join with the Ulster Volunteers to defend the coasts of Ireland thus freeing the army for the European front. 139

Reservists from the South of Ireland responded to the mobilization order. In Cork enthusiastic crowds cheered the naval reservists on their way, 140 and a few days later the crowds became so boisterous that the police had to resort to a baton charge to clear the platform at the Glanmire terminus in Cork. 141

It was soon clear that Redmond's stand enjoyed considerable support throughout Ireland and the direction in which he seemed to be leading the Irish Volunteers won over a number of

139 Freemen's Journal, 4 August, 1914.
140 Cork Examiner, 4 August, 1914.
141 Ibid., 6 August, 1914.
prominent Southern unionists. Lord Fingall, Sir Hutchinson Poe, Lord Powerscourt, Lord Longford and the Earl of Desart were all reported as having rallied to the Volunteers.\textsuperscript{142} Professor Mahaffy, the Vice-Provost of Trinity College, gave the Volunteers permission to practice signalling in the college park.\textsuperscript{143} The Redmond proposal seemed adequate to a number of unionists particularly in the light of the expectations concerning the war expressed by the \textit{Cork Examiner} which theorized that: "It may reasonably and fairly be assumed that England's part in the war will be purely naval, and that for the present at any rate no Expeditionary Force will be sent to the continent".\textsuperscript{144} Irish Volunteers from all parts of Ireland paraded to see reservists off, many of whom were themselves Volunteers. Volunteer units from Ballinakill, Rathdowney, Donoghmore, Crossmolina, Aughrim, Abbeyfale, Gola, Cullen, etc. adopted resolutions of support for the stand taken by Redmond, resolutions which on the whole closely resembled that unanimously adopted by the Mount Melleray Corps which read:

\begin{quote}
We, the men of the above-mentioned corps, desire to express our ever unswerving faith in Mr. Redmond, and our approval of his offer to the Government on Monday last. We hereby place ourselves at his disposal, let him order us where he pleases. Every Irishman worthy of the name is ready to shed his
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{142}\textit{Freeman's Journal}, 7 August, 1914.  
\textsuperscript{143}W.B. Stamford and R.B. McDowell, \textit{Mahaffy: A Biography of An Anglo-Irishman}, op. cit., p. 222.  
\textsuperscript{144}7 August, 1914.
life-blood to the last bitter drop in protecting his native shores against foreign aggression.\textsuperscript{145}

Popular enthusiasm coming from below once again posed a threat from the people of Ireland to the organization which the extremists had worked so hard to build up and to control; Eoin MacNeill, on behalf of the headquarters staff, attempted to staunch the flow of popular pro-Redmond sentiment being expressed by Volunteer units and he sent a letter to the press saying that:

As various statements and proposals are reported with regard to the position of the Irish Volunteers at this juncture; it would be well to note that no announcements, undertakings, or communications regarding the policy or general attitude of the Irish Volunteers should go forth from the Volunteers without the authority of Headquarters, or unless so authorized, should be regarded as valid.\textsuperscript{146}

The resolution which was passed by the Cork City Corps of the Volunteers after this statement by MacNeill was notably more restrained than the earlier resolutions and stated simply:

That the Committee of the Cork City Corps Irish Volunteers, approves of the proposal set forward by the Provisional Committee of the Irish Volunteers and are prepared to act unanimously in accordance with their recommendations, namely, 'that the Irish Volunteers are prepared to join with the Ulster Volunteers for the defence of Ireland'.\textsuperscript{147}

The only united activity of the two Volunteer forces, however, was a joint parade to send off the Inniskilling Fusiliers.\textsuperscript{148}

The Prime Minister did make some acknowledgements of Redmond's offer and of the Volunteers' reaction to it in a

\textsuperscript{145}Cork Examiner, 7 August, 1914.
\textsuperscript{146}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{147}Ibid., 8 August, 1914.
\textsuperscript{148}10 August, 1914.
letter to the Private Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant in which he said:

His Majesty's Government recognize with deep gratitude the loyal help which Ireland has offered in this grave hour.
They hope to announce as soon as possible the arrangements by which this offer can be made use of to the fullest extent.149

To Redmond's dismay the current session of Parliament was adjourned to 25 August without the Home Rule Bill being placed on the Statute Book; though the Prime Minister did express the hope that a settlement could be reached during the recess.150 Asquith also announced that the new Secretary of State for War, Lord Kitchener, "will do everything in his power, after consultation with gentlemen in Ireland, to arrange for the full equipment and organization of the Irish Volunteers".151 In the Bray area the Irish Volunteers anticipated such arrangements and took matters into their own hands. Fifty Volunteers from Roundwood took up guard duty at the water reservoir. They had obtained the sanction of the Lord Mayor and of the Chairman of the Water Works Committee but they were shortly to complain that they received no recognition from the military and merely duplicated the work of the police and army.152

John Redmond continued to make highly optimistic statements about the Volunteers and their role. When presenting

149 Ibid., 8 August, 1914.
150 Ibid., 11 August, 1914.
151 Irish Weekly Independent, 15 August, 1914.
152 Freeman's Journal, 15 August, 1914.
colours to the Maryborough Corps he declared that the Volunteer movement would create a new Ireland and he also announced that he would shortly present the Volunteers with several thousand rifles. The work of the Volunteers, he said,

... is the holiest work that men can undertake, to maintain the freedom, and the rights, and to uphold the peace and the order and the safety of their own nation. You ought to be proud, you, the sons and grandsons of men who were shot down for daring to arm themselves - you ought to be proud of the fact that you have lived to see the day when, with the goodwill of the democracy of England, you are arming yourselves in the light of heaven, and when in all your actions you can feel that you have at your back and upon your side the sympathy of every nation in the world, and the goodwill at long last, thanks be to God, of the people of England and Great Britain.

The amity shown by Irish Volunteers in general for the reservists on their way to join their units had accomplished a remarkable reconciliation between nationalists and Southern unionists but Sir Edward Carson remained aloof and made no response to the overtures of Eoin MacNeill for the purpose of uniting the two Volunteer forces. By the latter half of August some strain began to show between the Southern unionists and the nationalists. Sir Horace Plunkett, always one of the unionists most sympathetic to nationalist aspirations, wrote a letter to the Freeman's Journal in which

153 Ibid., 17 August, 1914.

he advocated the shelving of Home Rule until after the war. 155

The paper responded with a leading article demanding the immediate enactment of Home Rule, reflecting the Irish Party's indignation at Sir Horace's proposal and perhaps even more at the fact that it had been echoed by William O'Brien. 156

The strain, however, was most evident in the Irish Volunteer movement. The unionists who had lent their support to the movement favoured the placing of the Volunteers under War Office control. When the War Office, perhaps preoccupied with other problems, failed to act to bring the Volunteers under its aegis some unionists such as Lord Dunsany argued that the Irish Volunteers ought to take active steps to place themselves under the War Office. 157 The fact that the simplest such step was to enlist may have escaped neither Lord Dunsany nor those who, like Mr. P. White, M.P., Colonel Moore or Mr. J. Walsh, protested that the Volunteers should remain under Irish control. 158 Lord Fingall resigned from the Meath Volunteers over a similar dispute, 159 and the Cavan Volunteers passed a resolution that the County Board should not permit the appointment of any person other than a "known Nationalist" as inspecting officer or commanding officer. 160

155 20 August, 1914.
156 21 August, 1914.
157 Irish Weekly Independent, 22 August, 1914.
158 Ibid.,
159 Freeman's Journal, 24 August, 1914.
160 Freeman's Journal, 24 August, 1914.
split among Irish Volunteers therefore involved not the extremists and the Redmondites but the newly converted unionists and the nationalists camp. The unionists merely drifted out of the Volunteers and into the British Army.

The Parliamentary Nationalists were playing a very difficult game. They could not simply order the Irish Volunteers into the army, nor did they wish to do so, but they very much wanted to earn some gratitude from the British Government as a means of extracting generous terms for Home Rule. The people of Ireland clearly demonstrated in 1914 that they were on England's side in the European conflict. Piaras Beaslai, a member of the Irish Republican Brotherhood and of the Provisional Committee of the Volunteers, described the popular mood of Ireland in the following terms:

To those who have risen to manhood since 1916 it is hard to conceive the state of Ireland at the time. Never was there a period when the conquest of Ireland by England seemed more complete. Men, women, and children everywhere wore war-like badges in which the Union Jack was prominent; the strains of "God Save the King" were mingled with those of "A Nation Once Again"; the papers teemed with glorifications of the English Army and English people; all the political guides of the people preached that winning the war for England was the only thing that mattered.161

Joe Devlin was encouraging these sentiments saying to the Volunteers of Armagh that Irish freedom had been won, "the battle is over, the war is ended, and Ireland is free".162

162 Cork Examiner, 24 August, 1914.
The horizon, however, was not without clouds and it has been said that, for Redmond,

... the declaration of war involved two issues, for either of which he would have risked his life and his political reputation at any moment. One was to bring peace to Ireland; the other was to safeguard the British Empire, which to him always meant what the world has since come to recognize as that federation of independent and connected states which constitutes the British Commonwealth of Nations. There were Irish Nationalists even in those peaceful years who desired and abominated that attitude, and who actually believed — as P.H. Pearse said to the present writer fully a year before the War — that it would be better that Dublin should be laid in ruins than that the existing conditions of contentment and confident security within the British Empire should continue. Between them and Redmond there could be no political reconciliation.163

This was a repetition of what had once before split the Home Rule forces when Isaac Butt the founder and leader of the parliamentary Home Rule movement in 1878 had supported the British war effort during the Afghanistan War. As one of his biographers pointed out, "to Butt any other attitude in wartime would have been treason to the empire; to any Irish nationalist convinced of the dictum that England's difficulty was Ireland's opportunity it was treason to the Irish nation".164 Redmond's sentiments were those of Butt but, however much he might be convinced that Ireland's honour was involved in the support of England's war effort, in a competition of loyalty with Sir Edward Carson, the advantage was with the latter. Redmond's efforts were largely nullified

by the extremists who could be relied upon to shatter whatever favourable reaction he might elicit from British public opinion. He was also limited by the anti-Irish prejudice which had been mobilized to its full force during the Home Rule struggle particularly in the army. Lord Kitchener, an Anglo-Irishman, was no more ready to trust the Roman Catholic Irish than Tom Clarke was ready to trust the English yet if Redmond's strategy was to have a chance of success his offer of support must quickly bring tangible results; Lord Kitchener's prejudices and his position made such results unlikely. F. X. Martin had concluded that "If the British had backed Redmond wholeheartedly he would probably have managed to crowd MacNeill and his followers out of existence".  

A more positively destructive contribution of Lord Kitchener were his early references to possible conscription. These, though speedily denied by the Prime Minster, may have been militarily sound but politically they were disastrous particularly in Ireland.

The growing tensions within the Irish Volunteers between those who were pro-British in the war and those who concentrated exclusively on the cause of Irish nationality first came to a head publicly in Cork when Captain Talbot-Crosby, the Chief Inspecting Officer for County Cork, wrote a letter to the press


166 *Cork Examiner*, 26 and 27 August, 1914.
in which he said:

It is an open secret that there has been for sometime past, considerable friction between different sections of the Volunteers, and a leading article in the current issue of the "Irish Volunteer" - The official mouthpiece of the Provisional Committee - brings things to a head.

In this article it is boldly stated "England's war is not our war, except in so far as it offers Ireland a unique opportunity to achieve freedom."

With this declaration before us, it is now necessary to ask where the Volunteers stand. Are we going to co-operate with the British troops, or are we going to follow the committee with its chimerical schemes for the establishment of an independent Irish Republic?\textsuperscript{167}

Captain Talbot-Crosby went on to say that he favoured complete support of Britain as soon as the Home Rule Bill was placed on the Statute Book. He said publicly what many thought but had not dared voice, that "As is well known the Volunteer movement was started by a few extremists, who naturally obtained a firm hold on the different committees" and he proposed appealing from this small group who had established an ascendancy over the movement to the Volunteers of Cork themselves at the following Sunday's parade.\textsuperscript{168}

Eoin MacNeill immediately telegraphed that no one had the right to ask such questions nor were the Volunteers to answer them if asked. It is a sign that MacNeill's authority over the movement was slipping that Captain Talbot-Crosby not only asked his question but received an overwhelming response

\textsuperscript{167} Ibid., 31 August, 1914.

\textsuperscript{168} Ibid.
favouring his point of view. Between fifty and sixty of the one thousand Cork Volunteers did not answer that they were prepared to support Britain's war effort. The fact that this small number included all the officers testifies to the genius of Bulmer Hobson as a conspirator but it also demonstrates that in the face of the European crisis the separatists were failing to convert the people of Ireland despite all the advantages of being in virtual control of a large para-military organization.\(^{169}\)

At the end of August Parliament once again adjourned without taking any action on Home Rule. Redmond's position was becoming more difficult all the time. He genuinely wanted to support the Empire but he was aware of how difficult that would be without some tangible fruits of the victory he and his colleagues had been claiming. Redmond's perception of the role of the Volunteers allowed them two possible military functions. They could form part of the Imperial armed forces, preferably on the basis used for the setting up of British Territorials; or they could be used to defend an all-Ireland settlement, with or without temporary exclusion, against the anticipated armed resistance of Ulster unionists. Redmond preferred the first of these but its realization required the co-operation of the War Office and as time went on it became obvious that the War Office was unlikely to co-operate. Redmond then kept the second justification for

the existence of the Volunteers alive by distributing arms to Irish Volunteer units in Ulster. This was now legal, the Arms Proclamation having been revoked shortly after the declaration of war. The Freeman's Journal echoed Irish Party policy describing the Belfast Irish Volunteers as "The first line of defence for the peace and unity of Ireland". The All-for-Ireland League, however, aware of the dissensions within the Volunteers, came down very firmly on the British side and passed a resolution:

That they regard it as their solemn duty to tender his Majesty's ministers their assurances that the manhood of Ireland would give all the assistance they could in the present emergency. Whatever armed help Ireland had to offer would take its orders and discipline from the War Office, but only for the period of this war. Any independent action of their own would be farcical and madness.

The Nationalist camp's fabric of unity was showing ever larger gaps, but there is no question that Redmond still retained the confidence of the vast majority of Irishmen and the continued snubs of the War Office soon robbed the All-for-Ireland League's position of its meaning.

From a purely military point of view the War Office did not need 185,000 Irish Volunteers defending the shores of Ireland from unlikely invaders but it did need recruits. Sir Edward Carson was in a far better position to deal with Lord Kitchener than was Redmond and he was able to announce

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170 Freeman's Journal, 7 August, 1914.
171 3 September, 1914.
172 Cork Examiner, 3 September, 1914.
in early September that the Ulster Volunteers would be able to serve as a division in the British Army and he urged Ulster to use this opportunity to demonstrate her loyalty.173 The following day entire units of the Ulster Volunteers enlisted *en masse* in the army, an opportunity never extended to the Irish Volunteers.174 Volunteering, however, remained popular in the south of Ireland and six thousand Volunteers mobilized in Dublin on Sunday 6 September as part of a display of Irish Volunteer strength throughout Ireland.175 A separate Jewish Volunteer Corps was even formed in Dublin.176

The separatist elements in Ireland were at this time consolidating whatever support they had and one of their new supporters was James Connolly who, in late 1914, replaced Jim Larkin as General Secretary of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union while Larkin went to the United States. The war had deeply shocked Connolly who had hoped that socialists of the world would act in unison to prevent the eruption of war. His bitterness at the socialists who had found nationalism more compelling than the class war or an international front led him in much the same direction himself. He had always believed that the class war in Ireland necessitated as a first step the end of British domination and while he continued to detest the war itself he saw it as an

173 *Freeman's Journal*, 4 September, 1914.
174 Ibid., 5 September, 1914.
175 Ibid., 7 September, 1914.
176 Ibid., 8 September, 1914.
opportunity to destroy the British capitalist empire and to loosen the ties binding Ireland to England. Initially the war also provided an opportunity to rally the forces of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union and to restore its strength so disastrously sapped by the previous year's labour troubles in Dublin. Connolly sought out the representatives of the Irish Republican Brotherhood shortly after the beginning of the war. James Connolly because of this and of his subsequent activities has sometimes been portrayed as having given up socialism in favour of nationalism but this is to forget that anti-imperialism was an integral part of socialist doctrine. The grain of truth in the portrait of Connolly simply as an extreme nationalist is that he allied himself with traditional nativist Irish nationalism without obtaining from his new allies much more than a traditionalist commitment to a vague myth of primitive communism in ancient Ireland. He himself remained a socialist to his death and his failure was not as a devotee but as a missionary for his creed. On the other hand he was also, during his lifetime, unable to convince the majority of Irish trade unionists to accept his nationalist views. Connolly was certainly a remarkable Irishman, a self-educated man whose socialism coupled with his painfully acquired

erudition gave him a far wider and deeper world view than that of any other Irish separatist leader of the period but this should blind no one to his failure as a prophet.

Connolly declared his anti-imperialism early in the war when in a speech delivered on 30 August to commemorate the deaths of the victims of the police during the labour troubles of the previous year, a speech published in the Irish Worker of 5 September, he said: "Whether my speech is pro-German or pro-Irish, I don't know. An an Irish worker I owe a duty to our class; counting no allegiance to the Empire; I'd be glad to see it back in the bottomless pit". This was later amplified in an article where his continuing commitment to socialism was manifest. He then wrote:

Should a German Army land in Ireland to-morrow we should be perfectly justified in joining it if by so doing we could rid this country once and for all from its connection with the Brigand Empire that drags us unwillingly into this war. Should the working class of Europe, rather than slaughter each other for the benefit of kings and financiers, proceed to-morrow to erect barricades all over Europe, to break up bridges and destroy the transport services that war might be abolished, we should be perfectly justified in following such a glorious example and contributing to the final dethronement of the vulture classes that rule and rob the world...

Connolly's meeting with the representatives of the Irish Republican Brotherhood took place on 9 September, 1914 and was attended by William O'Brien from the Union and by Arthur Griffith who was not then a member of the Brotherhood. The meeting took place in the Gaelic League Library and the

decision was made to work for an armed rising before the end of the war and to enter into communication with Germany. \(^{180}\)

As O'Brien pointed out, however, "At that stage the men at that Conference were representative enough of the militant elements in the separatist minority in Ireland but they were far from representative of the great majority of people of nationalist opinion." \(^{181}\) Even within the Irish Republican Brotherhood Bulmer Hobson did not approve of the idea of a rising unless there was either an attack by Britain on Ireland in the likely form of the imposition of conscription, or the people of Ireland gave a clear mandate for revolution, in which case he favoured guerilla operations. He was no longer a member of the Supreme Council of the I.R.B., however, and as he related:

In the autumn of 1914, under the influence of McDermott, the Supreme Council of the IRB decided they would embark on an insurrection against the British Government before the European War came to an end. Some members of the Council demurred at this, but ceased to oppose it when they saw they were outnumbered. None of them apparently remembered that such action was forbidden by the Constitution they had all sworn to obey. No times were fixed; just a decision to act before the end of the war. \(^{182}\)

Patrick Pearse had moved from his faith and trust in the unerring instinct of the people of Ireland to a perception of their opinion as depraved. The extremist leaders resorted

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\(^{181}\) Ibid., p. 56.

to conspiratorial tactics as a result of their failure to carry Irish public opinion with them despite their having virtual control over the most splendid socialization and propaganda weapon in Ireland. Pearse in 1914 retained some faith in the people but it was waning. In a letter to McGarrity on 12 August, 1914 he said:

Now it is perfectly clear that whatever is to be done for Ireland in this crisis must be done outside The Provisional Committee. The men are sound, especially in Dublin. We could at any moment, rally the best of them to our support by a coup d'état; and rally the whole country if the coup d'état were successful.\footnote{F. X. Martin, ed., The Howth Gun-Running and the Kilcoole Gun-Running 1914, op. cit., p. 192.}

His opinions underwent great change and he was driven to his final position not only by love for Ireland but by his cult for manhood which could be satisfied by military activity and by his psychological inability to accept failure. At one time a Home Ruler who was largely ignored by the Parliamentary Party leadership, his great vanity had been skilfully exploited by Tom Clarke, who had seen the potential value of his oratorical talents to the extremist cause and had given him a free reign and the prominence he felt was his due. Haunted by the spectre of inadmissible failure, driven by a mixture of Gaelic and Christian mysticism, convinced of his own destiny never having shaken the heroic self-determinations of childhood, he came to rival Tom Clarke in fanatical hatred of England and assumed the military leadership of the forces of Irish nationalist extremism.
The extremists having come to a decision to have an insurrection, relations with their Redmondite colleagues in the Provisional Committee of the Irish Volunteers, never good, became even more difficult. At this time, when Connolly was being brought into the councils of the extremists, the Irish Volunteer, which was under extremist control, was repudiated by the Standing Committee of the Irish Volunteers, and a few days later the full Provisional Committee announced "that if any official connection existed between the paper and the Volunteer movement in the past that connection was terminated." The Standing Committee of the Irish Volunteers also issued a statement that "no proposal, suggestion or offer to train the Volunteers has been made to them by the Government. No proposal has been made on behalf of the Ulster Volunteer force to defend the coasts of Ireland". Both Redmond's ploys, one for safeguarding the Empire and winning English gratitude and the other to secure the unity of Ireland, were clearly being snubbed. The Southern unionists and the All-for-Ireland League were pressing for greater enlistments among Irish Volunteers and now there came a public expression of a similar pressure from within the Party's ranks at Westminster. Arthur Lynch, speaking in Ennis, made it clear that he felt that the Volunteers should be fighting in Europe. Arthur Lynch had been a student in both Germany and France and his sympathies

184 _Freeman's Journal_, 9 September, 1914.
185 _Ibid._, 11 September, 1914.
186 _Cork Examiner_, 9 September, 1914.
in the war were entirely with France. He considered France as Ireland's traditional ally as well as being culturally and ethnically related. Irishmen, he felt, had a duty to go to the aid of France and he was exerting pressure on Redmond to commit the Volunteers to a greater involvement in the war. 187

Redmond's position was made even more difficult by two announcements which were published on 10 September. The first said that "Recruiting amongst the members of the Ulster Volunteer Force has up to the present far exceeded the military expectations in Belfast". 188 The second announcement was that "Owing to the failure of Irish recruiting to come up to the standard anticipated; it is now proposed to fill the ranks of the Irish division with English recruits". 189 A further difficulty was created by the resolution of the Gaelic League "forbidding speakers at Gaelic League meetings to express themselves in favour of one side or the other in the present war". 190 Such a resolution was not calculated to create a favourable impression on British opinion. At a time when the United Kingdom was at war it was bound to strike many as being a distinctly hostile act, yet Redmond was aware that he needed confirmation of his Home Rule victory before he could take a more active stand on recruiting for the British Army and erase some of the unfavourable impressions created by extremists.

187 Ibid.
188 Cork Examiner
189 Freeman's Journal
The Government, having achieved a political truce with the Opposition was searching for a way to defuse the Irish Question, at least so as to prevent trouble and hopefully to stimulate recruiting without reviving the animosity between the two major parties. At the cost of some Unionist discontent the Prime Minister moved to simultaneously enact and suspend the Home Rule Bill and the Welsh Disestablishment Bill, with a further undertaking not to coerce Ulster into Home Rule. Sir Edward Carson's immediate retort was that this betrayed the party truce, but the Leader of the Opposition announced that the Conservatives would support the Government because such was their duty in a crisis but he forecast that it would be a generation before this act of treachery was forgotten and he added "that no power on earth would ever compel the people of Ulster to submit to a Nationalist Parliament against their will". A few years later Ronald McNeill described the feelings of frustration of the Ulster Unionists at this time saying:

The promise of the Prime Minister of the day, when accepting the proffered support of a patriotic Opposition, that no controversial measures should be taken seemed no more than political decency dictated, and was qualified by no exception. Nevertheless, the Home Rule Bill, which had been the pivot of the struggle, and which had not quite completed its course under the Parliament Act, was immediately placed, not on the shelf, but on the Statute Book. This breach of faith was hotly resented by the opponents of the measure, both in Parliament and in

191 Cork Examiner, 15 September, 1914.
192 Ibid., 16 September, 1914.
the country, but the gravity of the European situation made it impossible for them to do more than register a violent protest.¹⁹³

The granting of Royal Assent to the Home Rule Bill created problems for Sir Edward Carson; not only was the King's picture greeted with disrespect and congregations walked out of Churches when the National Anthem was sung but, potentially more serious, Ulster Volunteers trampled on their attestation forms.¹⁹⁴ Faced with the danger that the Ulster Volunteers might attack Southern Irishmen Sir Edward issued a strongly worded manifesto to the loyalists of Ulster.

By an act of unparalleled treachery and betrayal the Radical Government, at the dictation of their Nationalist allies, have announced their intention of passing into law, without discussing the Amending Bill which they themselves introduced, the detestable Home Rule Bill which we are pledged to defeat at all costs. They are taking advantage of the situation created by the war which threatens the very existence of the United Kingdom and the Empire, to inflict upon us this degradation and humiliation. The Government have thought it an opportune moment when a great number of members of Parliament are serving their country, and so many of our own people have nobly responded to Lord Kitchener's appeal, and when therefore we could not enter upon resistance without injuring and weakening our country, to seek a party triumph without any regard to national interests. The infamy of such a proceeding will, I know, sink deeply into the heart of every loyal and patriotic man, and will I am sure, act as a stimulus to the fight to the finish which we have covenanted to carry out.

¹⁹⁴Breandan MacGiolla Choille, ed., Intelligence Notes 1913-16, op. cit., pp. 72 and 101.
But I ask my followers in Ulster to remember that this is not the action of the nation, but of a despicable political faction, and our duty at the present moment is towards our country and the Empire. 'Our country first' is, and always has been our motto. We must therefore, notwithstanding this indignity, go on with our preparations to assist our country, and strain every nerve to defeat its enemies. But you may rest assured that we shall not slacken for a moment our efforts to be prepared when our country is out of danger to take action as may be necessary to carry out our Covenant to the end. I once more promise to go straight on with you in the fight, strengthened by the belief that Great Britain will never forgive the base treachery of the Government. We will not have Home Rule - never.196

In the nationalist camp there was great rejoicing and some increase in recruiting. Captain Talbot-Crosbie immediately announced that he was forming a Cork fighting corps for service on the continent.197 John Redmond issued a long manifesto in which he welcomed the final passage of the Home Rule Bill. He asserted that by the granting of Royal Assent the democracy of Great Britain "have kept faith with Ireland. It is now a duty of honour for Ireland to keep faith with them". He went on to describe the war as a "just war" and as "a war for high ideals of human government and international relations, and Ireland would be false to her history, and to every consideration of honour, good faith, and self-interest, did she not willingly bear her share in its burdens and sacrifices". He did, however, call for a specifically Irish brigade with Irish officers and he

196Freeman's Journal, 16 September, 1914.
197Ibid.
concluded with an appeal to the Irish unionists to accept the friendship of Nationalist Ireland. From the unionists there was no response but on the same day in the House of Lords, Earl Beauchamp, speaking for the Secretary of State for War, declared that Lord Kitchener had no plans or desire to organize the Irish Volunteers but that he did want as many Irish recruits as possible.

With the extremists committed to an insurrection against England by the Irish Volunteers and Redmond striving to use the same body for the support of the British war effort a split in the movement was well nigh inevitable. The occasion for this break came as a result of a speech which Redmond gave while inspecting a body of Irish Volunteers at Woodenbridge in the Wicklow hills but there was already no further reason for the extremists to support Redmond. The placing of the Home Rule Act on the Statute Book was clearly the last major concession which Redmond would be able to obtain from the Government during the war. The Irish Party, as a consequence of the political truce between the Liberals and the Conservatives, had lost its lever upon the Government. Had the war lasted less than a year, as everyone but Lord Kitchener seemed to assume it would, disillusionment might not have set in and the extremists' plans would probably have come to nought but it was to drag on for many years while Home Rule

198 Ibid., 17 September, 1914.
199 Ibid.
accumulated dust on the shelf and cynicism in Ireland.

Redmond's speech at Woodenbridge was a recruiting speech encouraging the Irish Volunteers to extend their horizons and to defend the rights of Ireland on European battlefields. The Fermoy Irish Volunteers immediately expressed their unanimous support for Redmond's policy. This time, however, the extremists on the Provisional Committee reacted swiftly before being engulfed in the groundswell of support for Redmond and before Redmond returned to Dublin to join the Prime Minister on a recruiting platform at the Mansion House on 25 September. Most of the members of the original Provisional Committee of the Irish Volunteers met and, while they formed only a minority of the existing Provisional Committee, they "expelled" the majority. The group issued a manifesto justifying its action where the main specific accusation against Redmond was that he had announced a major policy change without having first consulted the Provisional Committee, the Volunteers themselves or the people of Ireland. The charge is ironic coming from those who were themselves trying to impose an even bigger change surreptitiously not only upon the Irish Volunteers but upon the Irish Republican Brotherhood as well. It is also clear that had Redmond consulted the Provisional Committee he would have been supported by a small majority, had he consulted the Volunteers themselves

200 Ibid., 21 September, 1914.
201 Cork Examiner, 22 September, 1914.
he would have obtained a very large majority and had he consulted the people his support would have been overwhelming. The manifesto contained a six point proposal which appealed to anti-partitionist sentiment and to the feeling that the Home Rule Act should be operational before Irishmen were asked to enlist in the British Army. These members of the original Provisional Committee were thus acting very much in opposition to the main current of Irish public opinion.

Robert Kee has pointed out that Redmond:

> Although, as when he spoke in the House of Commons six weeks earlier, he had virtually consulted no one before speaking, he had gauged the mood of Irish opinion exactly. What he said was wholly in line with what the majority of the people of Ireland were thinking and the recruiting figures from Ireland were soon to show it. Dillon, who was less enthusiastic about the war than Redmond in terms of international policy, though not in terms of Ireland's identification with the rest of Britain, made no objection at the time to this speech as he had made none to the earlier one, and indeed he was to support it and elaborate it on public platforms over the months to come. The only people who did object were a small caucus of the Volunteers comprised mostly, as one might have expected, of the I.R.B. men, Sinn Fein supporters and other advanced nationalists who still wanted to think traditionally of England's war being Ireland's opportunity.

The majority of the Irish Party's representatives at Westminster endorsed Redmond's advice to go to the front. Colonel Moore, the Inspector General of the Irish Volunteers, whose sympathies placed him closer to MacNeill than to Redmond

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202 *Irish Volunteer*, 3 October, 1914.
203 *The Green Flag*, op. cit., pp. 519-520.
accepted Redmond's stand on organizational grounds and he wrote an open letter in which he explained his stand saying:

I am bound to tell the Volunteers what I believe to be their duty in the very difficult situation in which they have been placed. The English Constitution was threatened only a few months ago by a military strike, so that officers and soldiers were near to deciding the fate of Home Rule over the heads of the Irish representatives. It is in the memory of us all how bitterly we complained of such an injustice, and now, by a strange fate, the very army we raised for our own defense is ordered to overthrow the acknowledged leaders of the Irish people, and that too, at the very moment when they have accomplished, or almost accomplished, the object of all our wishes.205

The Midland Volunteer Force also declared its support for Redmond's stand.206

The placing of the Home Rule Act on the Statute Book, whatever expressions of despair it provoked from Ulster unionists, had in fact weakened the position of the Irish Parliamentary Party at Westminster. The Curragh Incident and the Government's reaction to it had demonstrated that the Government in fact no longer was in a position to coerce Ulster, the war had increased the power of the military and, as earlier pointed out, had also led to a political entente between the leadership of the two main parties. As noted by one commentator:

Their differences over Ireland were settled by the formal enactment of the Home Rule Bill, together with its suspension for the duration of the war and the solemn pledge that Ulster would never be coerced

205Cork Examiner, 26 September, 1914.
206Freeman's Journal, 26 September, 1914.
out of the United Kingdom. The Asquith Government thus became independent of the Irish party, which lost its only effective lever for keeping the Liberal leaders to their promises.\textsuperscript{207}

This was masked for a time by the Prime Minister's visit to Dublin to stimulate recruiting. There, at the Mansion House, he promised an Irish Army Corps or at the very least an Irish Brigade,\textsuperscript{208} and a few days later a significant increase in Irish recruiting was reported.\textsuperscript{209} The extremists who, in the pages of \textit{Irish Freedom}, had denounced Redmond as "Judas in Action" even before Woodenbridge\textsuperscript{210} were caustic about the suspended Home Rule Act.

Nothing could be more insulting than the miserable farce offered us in lieu of our rights in as much as only a nation of imbeciles would accept the offer, or be deceived by so transparent a trick. Is Mr. Redmond himself deceived? Is he as far-gone as imbecile as England seems to think is the national type? If not - if indeed, he knows the value of the thing that is offered us - he is as vile a traitor as any Dante found in the deep ninth Hell. For is he not conspiring with those whose aim and hope is to see Ireland's name taken forever from the roll of the nations? Is he not aiding those who would partition our nation so that the unity by which it lives would be destroyed? Is he not party to the plot to disarm us so that we shall be defenceless against whatever treachery or tyranny may devise? Has he not helped to promulgate the lying propaganda by which the issues of the inequitous continental war have been disguised? Has he not urged young Ireland to give the life our country needs to a foreign quarrel? Has he not immolated Ireland's honour, and betrayed her great opportunity to achieve her ancient dream? We know he has done all these, and we know they are

\textsuperscript{207} E. Strauss, \textit{Irish Nationalism and British Democracy}, op. cit., p. 253.

\textsuperscript{208} \textit{Freeman's Journal}, 26 September, 1914.

\textsuperscript{209} Ibid., 29 September, 1914.

\textsuperscript{210} September, 1914.
the work either of incredible stupidity or of
damnable treachery and sacrilege.211

It was in this issue that Irish Freedom seemed to seek suppres-
sion by praising freedom - loving Germany and concluding
with "Hoch der Kaiser!"

Meanwhile James Connolly had been transforming the Irish
Citizen Army into a more clearly nationalist body than it
had hitherto been and one of the first manifestations of the
change was a plan hatched by Connolly and Sean MacDermott
for the Irish Citizen Army and the MacNeill Volunteers to
mount a combined operation and occupy the Mansion House before
Asquith's meeting. They were foiled by the presence of a
British Army guard and instead held a counter meeting in St.
Stephen's Green at the Wolfe Tone Memorial.212 The Irish
Citizen Army was by now a minuscule though fanatically anti-
English body and MacNeill's Volunteers had retained only a
very small proportion of the original Volunteers, most units
being paralyzed at this time by the split. Most of the units
were in the process of holding meetings to decide whether
they would support Redmond or whether they would follow MacNeill.
In the vast majority of cases the decision was to remain with
Redmond. The dilemma of some Irishmen who were not blindly
committed to either side was illustrated by the attitude
revealed by Cardinal Logue in interviews given in Plymouth

211 October, 1914.

212 See R. M. Fox, The History of the Irish Citizen Army,
op. cit., p. 82.
on his return from the Conclave in Rome. He supported without reservation the war effort directed against Germany, but he refused to support the Home Rule measure until he knew the content of the Amending Bill. This kind of feeling would eventually favour Sinn Fein as perception of relative deprivation increased and as no advance of the Home Rule for all Ireland front was made but in 1914, even following the Volunteer split, there is no doubt that Redmond's policy of loyal nationalism enjoyed the allegiance of Ireland.

At the end of September, the majority of the Provisional Committee of the Irish Volunteers met in Dublin and elected John Redmond President of the Irish National Volunteers. MacNeill received most of his support among the Dublin Volunteers and it has been argued that it was the urban proletariat of Dublin which tended to follow MacNeill, thus confirming the relevance of the social conditions of the Irish capital to the growth of political extremism. The entire "C" Company of the 4th Dublin Battalion went with MacNeill after Captain M'Carty delicately framed the question.

... would they remain loyal to the declaration made by them when signing the enrolment form - would they remain loyal to Ireland - or were they prepared to cast aside and trample underfoot the green uniform of the Irish National Army, which could be seen today

213 *Cork Examiner*, 29 September, 1914.
214 *Freeman's Journal*, 30 September, 1914.
215 *Cork Examiner*, 1 October, 1914.
216 See C. Desmond Greaves, *Liam Mellows and the Irish Revolution*, op. cit., p. 71. Greaves points out that in County Dublin only 200 out of 3,500 Volunteers followed MacNeill while in the city 1,103 out of 2,375 did so.
in every city and town in Ireland, and don in its stead the uniform of England, which had always been the symbol of tyranny and oppression?  

In Rathfarnham it was reported that approximately one hundred Volunteers opted for Redmond's leadership and sixty followed Patrick Pearse into the MacNeill camp, typically these sixty included all the officers. Major-General Sweeney, writing fifty-two years later, recalled that "practically to a man" the Rathfarnham unit followed Pearse. This illustrates the current tendency to overemphasize both the significance of the MacNeill wing of the Volunteers during 1914 and the charismatic appeal of Patrick Pearse. In Cork only fifty out of two thousand Volunteers opted for MacNeill. Robert Kee made the important observation that:

The impression has often been given that Redmond's pro-recruiting speech at Woodenbridge left the minority Irish Volunteers as the only active group in Irish nationalist opinion. This is a travesty of fact and of the whole character of Irish nationalist history. The vast majority of Irish nationalist opinion - those whose nationalism found expression in the idea of Home Rule - remained as nationalistic and active as before, behind Redmond's policy of support for the Imperial war effort. The long-term result of this was inevitably that the cream of the Volunteer movement was eventually drawn off into the British Army, and the majority Volunteer movement at home gradually lost its vitality. Even by the early autumn of 1914, at the time of the split, many of the best of the Volunteer drill instructors, who

217 *Freeman's Journal*, 2 October, 1914.


had mainly been ex-British Army men on the Reserve, had been recalled as reservists. Other enthusiastic Volunteers were naturally among the first to leave to enlist in the British Army. But for a time even at home the Redmond National Volunteers remained strong and active, certainly putting the activities of the small body of obscure secessionists into the shade for the time being, and demonstrating that Redmond's attitude in no way bewildered or confused the majority of the nationalists.221

John Redmond received enthusiastic receptions wherever he went in Ireland. In Wexford the local G.A.A. club members turned out to welcome him and at that meeting Redmond demonstrated that he was well aware of the danger to his policy which an independent and hostile armed movement represented. He told the crowd:

I warn you that if the control of this armed force were left in the hands of irresponsible, unrepresentative, unknown and untried men, instead of in the hands of tried, staid and proved men, if it were left in the hands of well-known cranks and mischief-makers - I say to you, under these circumstances, the Volunteers may tomorrow find themselves the tools of the enemies of Ireland, and be a curse instead of a blessing to the country.222

On the same day John Dillon, speaking in Ballaghaderreen, was also verbally roasting the Sinn Feiners; as the parliamentarians already referred to MacNeill's followers. He found it

... difficult to understand what can be the object of these men unless it be to paralyze the national forces on the very eve of victory, and leave the country helpless at the feet of Sir Edward Carson, they could not do his work more faithfully or more effectively.

But earlier in his speech he had referred to the assumption

221 The Green Flag, op. cit., p. 521.
222 Freeman's Journal, 5 October, 1914.
concerning the war which was basic to the Irish Parliamentary position.

If the Home Rule Bill had been passed without any Suspending Bill, the Irish Parliament would have assembled in April or May next year. Under the Suspending Bill; its assembling has been postponed until November or December next year. That is the whole sum total of the effect of the Suspending Bill, and really, no rational man who desired to see Home Rule a success would ask the Government to set up an Irish Parliament and a new Constitution for this country while the present terrible war was raging.223

The Irish Parliamentary Party thus expected the war to come to a speedy end. The parliamentary struggle to get the most extensive measure of Home Rule possible would then resume where it had left off. An organized armed movement led by extremists would grow progressively more dangerous the longer the war lasted and frustration increased as a result of the lack of political developments. A prolonged war was also a threat from the British side in that it would overshadow the Irish Question and bring Unionists and Liberals closer together, a process already under way in late 1914. By the middle of October Redmond was on the offensive against the Sinn Feiners and he was increasing his recruiting efforts. In Kilkenny, after describing the Home Rule Act as a "real free constitution", he went on:

We said - "Give us Home Rule, and we will be a strength and not a weakness to your Empire". We accept the responsibility which the concession of Home Rule casts upon us, just as we will insist upon the advantages which autonomy within the

223 Ibid.
Empire will bring to this country... A little body of men who, if you look back twenty or thirty years, have done nothing to gain our free constitution, whose names you won't find in the National movement for the last 20 years, but who are known to us as cranks and mischief makers lurking in the dark corners, to endeavour to slate us and trip us up in our work. This small body of men are saying to the Irish people, "Oh, it is true that England has passed Home Rule, but you have got a chance of having it out with her for some wrongs committed two or three hundred years ago. Never mind your promises, never mind your treaties, tear up your pledges and refuse to stand by your colleagues"... They heard a great deal about defending Ireland from any and every foe, but to say that Irishmen were only willing to defend her by remaining at home at ease without taking any risk or danger was a contemptible policy. Irishmen should bear a fair share of the obligation of the position they had won.224

The domestic opponents of John Redmond were not, however, in any way united yet. James Connolly in the Irish Worker was urging a more aggressive policy though for a more limited objective than total separation:

The Provisional Committee must attack aggressively, resolutely, openly, or they and their followers will be wiped out of existence. Aggressive action will convert the waverers better than a thousand speeches or a hundred printed proclamations. Again, let me repeat it, let us never forget it. This fight against Redmondism and Devlinism is a fight to save the soul of Ireland.

I would respectfully suggest that there are certain things which the Volunteers might at once initiate a campaign for, with the certainty of winning the adhesion of everyone worth their salt in Ireland. Pledge the Irish National Volunteers to remain in armed service to Ireland and to resist attempts of any other nation to deprive Ireland of their services.

224 Cork Examiner, 19 October, 1914.
Pledge the services of their armed forces in Ireland to enforce the repeal of all clauses in the Home Rule Bill denying to Ireland powers of self-government now enjoyed by South Africa, Australia and Canada.

Agitation for a definite object is the best recruiting campaign that the Volunteers could carry out; their pledge to fight for that object will be the guarantee of their success in their fight for the soul of Ireland. Volunteers, Forward! Forward! Forward!

This exhortation from the labour forces in Ireland may have been resented by some of the MacNeill Volunteers for on the following Sunday, when both groups of Volunteers paraded to mark the twenty-third anniversary of the death of Parnell, James Larkin attempted to participate in the ceremonies of the MacNeill wing but was shouted down and ended up holding his own commemorative meeting. The Sinn Fein Volunteers were abused and attacked by the crowd during a parade in Galway but they picked up the support of Canon Denis O'Riordan of Listowel. Rumours that the Military Ballot Act would be applied to Ireland did however assist their cause and the War Office contributed to the alienation of the Roman Catholic clergy because of delay in replying to a request by the hierarchy for more chaplains at the front. The decimation of the Munster Fusiliers in the retreat from Mons was not

10 October, 1914.

226 Freeman's Journal, 12 October, 1914.

227 Cork Examiner, 17 October, 1914.

228 The request originated at Maynooth on 13 October; was repeated by Cardinal Logue towards the end of October and was finally acted on by the War Office on 7 November, 1914. See Cork Examiner, 14 October and 9 November, 1914 and Irish Weekly Independent, 24 October, 1914.

229 Freeman's Journal, 21 October, 1914.
fully compensated for in the public mind by John Redmond's announcement that the War Office had finally consented to the creation of an Irish Brigade which was to be the third brigade of Lieutenant-General Parson's 16th Division.²³⁰ Even that news, in the absence of War Office confirmation, tended to demonstrate the isolation in which the Irish Party increasingly found itself at Westminster.

The Gaelic League was experiencing severe tension at this time between those who were trying to preserve the political neutrality of the League and to concentrate on its cultural goals and those who sought to secure a strong anti-British political stand from the League. The pages of An Claidheamn Soluis reflected the increased activity of the extremists. The extremists were supported at a distance by the Clan-na-Gael which issued a manifesto at a meeting in Atlantic City, New Jersey, accusing John Redmond of deliberate and wanton treachery and describing the Home Rule Act as a "political abortion".²³¹ The extremist propaganda, the Mons disaster and the insensitivity of the War Office resulted in a falling off of recruiting in Dublin, though the War Office did express satisfaction at the overall figure since the beginning of the war.²³² On 14 November, 1914 twelve hundred Irish casualties were reported which was unlikely to encourage high levels of

²³⁰Irish Weekly Independent, 24 October, 1914.
²³¹Freeman's Journal, 23 October, 1914.
²³²Freeman's Journal, 29 October, 1914 and 14 November, 1914.
enlistment particularly in the absence of official recognition of the exploits of Irish troops. All these things tended to have not only an adverse effect on recruiting but also to contribute nothing to increase Redmond's popularity at home. One student of the period has commented that:

The strange action of Asquith reduced in a radical manner Redmond's popularity in Ireland. There was particular bitterness concerning the broken pledges of the Prime Minister concerning the treatment of Irish troops. In the retreat from Mons, the 2nd Battalion of the Royal Munster Fusiliers had fought a gallant rear-guard action and had nearly been wiped out while waiting for orders that never arrived. Disaster attended the landing of the 29th Division on the end of the Gallipoli peninsula, and the Munster and Dublin Fusiliers were badly cut up. Their gallantry in action had received little publicity and it was soon evident that Irish regiments could expect no favourable notice. 233

Ironically, when the Cunard Line announced in November that it would resume calls at Queenstown, the decision was so clearly dictated by the necessities of war that Redmond was unable to claim any credit. 234 In fact the decision merely underlined his weakness vis a vis the Government.

Professor T. M. Kettle in November voiced feelings which no other Home Ruler had dared to do, but which many no doubt shared, when he attacked the Gaelic League, charging "that for the last three years the official ring of the Gaelic League had been a deeper, a stronger, and a subtler enemy of

233 Charles Callan Tansill, America and the Fight for Irish Freedom 1866-1922, op. cit., p. 163.
234 Cork Examiner, 16 November, 1914.
spiritual freedom than Dublin Castle". This was resented by Gaelic Leaguers and the following day Professor Kettle was hissed at a Davis Centenary meeting also addressed by Yeats and by Patrick Pearse. At this meeting Pearse ignored Kettle's invitation to debate their respective positions. Pearse's appeal being to the emotion rather than to reason this was probably a wise decision. Pearse had in any case always been reputed as an orator rather than as a debater. Emotionally the Irish Parliamentary Party was hard pressed to compete with the powerful myths evoked by the extremists particularly when persistent rumours of conscription were reminding the Party of the painful realities with which they had to deal. John Redmond could boast, as he did in Tuam, that 140,000 Irishmen were serving with the colours but that included Irish emigrants to the Dominions and to England as well as their descendants. His appeal was sincere and his references to the Home Rule Act as representing a treaty of peace between the democracies of England and Ireland were accepted as true by the vast majority of the Irish public. Ireland in 1914 did extend the hand of friendship despite the extremists' ragings but Great Britain was too busy pursuing the war to respond to these advances and so the gesture remained without meaning. The Irish Parliamentary

236 Ibid., 21 November, 1914.
237 *Cork Examiner*, 5 December, 1914.
Party's policy of urging upon the British Government a tolerant response to the propaganda of various extremist groups was only appropriate if the Government responded to Redmond's overtures and initiated changes which reduced alienation and deprived hostile groups of a passively alienated mass upon which they could act. Eventually in December the Irish administration did suppress a number of extremist publications but did not interfere with the MacNeill Volunteers thus paving the way for the realization, a year and a half later, of John Dillon's fears that the first use of Irish military power would be for Irishmen to bayonet each other in the streets of Dublin.

In late 1914 with the end of the war still expected in the proximate future, the machinery of Irish administration under Mr. Birrell had been allowed to run down and the British Government was quite aware of the advantages of allowing a Home Rule administration to deal with the extremists. The key element in such a scheme was that the war should end and a Home Rule administration be speedily set up. This ignored the Ulster problem but the Government had by now bowed to the inevitability of excluding Ulster. Irish public opinion at this time was by no means changing exclusively in a single direction away from Redmond and late in the year he began to recover some of the support which had been shaken by his

238 *Freeman's Journal*, 4 December, 1914.

239 See *Freeman's Journal*, 19 November, 1914.
acceptance of temporary exclusion for Ulster. The Roman Catholic hierarchy for instance increasingly came to his support particularly on the question of recruiting. Dr. Brown, the Bishop of Cloyne, referred to a positive obligation on the part of the Irish to assist the Belgians. This marked a change and offset the effects of Dr. O'Donnell's advice earlier in the *Irish Volunteer* that:

This war not being Ireland's war, the Irish Volunteers must remain under Irish control and be used for the purpose for which they were started - namely, the preservation of Ireland for the Irish. No Irish leader had the right to pledge the support of Ireland to England against Germany or against any other nation.

In this advice the Bishop of Raphoe was echoing the paper's editorial policy of favouring neutrality for the Volunteers which had been put forward the previous week when the paper had declared that:

England, the Bully of the Nations is in a difficulty. It is our duty to our ancestors, who risked and lost their lives to free Ireland from England, it is our duty to ourselves, who live under the heel of the mass of the same hypocritical power, it is our duty above all to those who will come after us in the inheritance of this land, to declare Ireland's neutrality; to refuse, in the words of the Volunteers' Manifesto, any foreign service under a government which is not Irish, and to decline all part in foreign quarrels for which the Irish people have no responsibility.

Since then the British and French news services as well as the Belgian Bishops had made a strong case against Germany

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241 17 October, 1914.
242 *Irish Volunteer*, 10 October, 1914.
which drew to Redmond increasing support from the hierarchy. In early December Dr. Brown repeated his endorsement of Redmond and this was endorsed a few days later by Dr. Harty, Archbishop of Cashel, and by Dr. Cohalan, the auxiliary Bishop of Cork.

The year, indeed, ended on a hopeful note for the Irish Parliamentary Party as a potentially serious rift developed within the ranks of MacNeill's supporters. The rift was made public through the resignation of Michael Judge from the Provisional Committee of the dissident Volunteers. Mr. Judge, who had been bayoneted at Clontarf, referred in his letter of resignation to his long and dedicated service to the Volunteers movement and to his defense of the rights of the Irish Volunteers which had led him to oppose the acceptance of Redmond's nominees earlier in the year. He went on:

To-day by my action in severing my connection with the governing body of the Irish Volunteers I stand for the very same rights and liberties, because they are assailed by a small section which seeks to obtain complete control of the movement and strives after arbitrary powers before which the militarism of the Kaiser's Government would fade into insignificance.

I do not belong to that section; I never did and I never will belong to it. If I were to become a partisan, I should return to my allegiance to the elected representatives of the Irish people, from whom I only differed on a matter of principle, and in whose ability and sagacity I have very much more confidence than my intimate knowledge of my colleagues on the old Provisional Committee incline

243Cork Examiner, 8 December, 1914.

244Ibid., 16 December 1914 and 18 December, 1914.
me to place in them.

The government of a people should be vested in that people; the government of the Volunteers should be vested in the Volunteers and I would be false to every principle I ever professed if I submitted. 245

Efforts to establish branches of the Irish Republican Brotherhood in Donegal and Clare were going badly, most of rural Ireland remaining solidly with Redmond. 246 Redmond was thus still firmly in command of the loyalties of the broad mass of the Irish people. The strength of the Irish Volunteers had been estimated by the police at 182,097 in September and by December, despite the split and a fairly high level of enlistment the Redmondite Volunteers were estimated to number 157,524 while those who had gone with MacNeill were estimated at 9,971. 247 Yet 1914 was an extraordinary year in Irish history and Sir Ernest Barker, shortly after the end of the first World War remarked:

"It is indeed one of the most amazing things in Irish history that by the end of 1914 four separate forces, unequal in efficiency but all equally illegal, should have been marching and drilling and taking to themselves arms, while the Irish Government sat waiting and watching. It all happened; but if it had not happened it would have been incredible; and now that it has happened it is almost inexplicable. 248

With hindsight it is easy to read in the events of 1914

245 Freeman's Journal, 19 December, 1914.
247 Breandan MacGiolla Choille, ed., Intelligence Notes 1913–16, op. cit., p. 110.
248 Ireland in the Last Fifty Years (1866-1918), op. cit., p.105.
an inevitable progression towards the Irish Free State or the Republic of Ireland but in 1914 Home Rule was still the preferred solution to the Irish Question for the vast majority of Irishmen. The problems in settling the Irish Question had little to do with the legislative scope of the Home Rule Act but involved rather its geographical limits. Partition was a necessary price for Home Rule but that unpalatable fact could not at once be accepted and the outbreak of war effaced the necessity of a continuing search for a solution. The passage of the Home Rule Act despite its suspension and the pledges which accompanied it deeply offended the Protestant community in Ulster but, far more seriously, it would be realized, after the exhaustion of initial enthusiasm, that the passage of the Act had made no difference to the relationship between Ireland and England as seen from England. The War Office attitude towards Home Rule Ireland was already exposing the unchanged nature of the British perception of that relationship as well as reviving feelings of frustration and alienation which the Irish Parliamentary Party, because of its attitude towards the war, could no longer relieve. But with the end of the war supposedly in sight the Irish Party could afford to ignore these developments.

The war though it brought on increased frustrations because of the suspension of Home Rule, the threat of conscription and the prospect of partition also brought about an initial
increase in prosperity as the woollen mills and shoe factories in particular began to receive War Office contracts. The Government, supported by the Irish Party, largely ignored the intensified propaganda efforts of the extremists. This could be reckoned a wise policy provided that the war ended soon and provided that the almost impossibly high hopes of the Irish regarding the Home Rule Act were in some measure recognized and gratified. At the close of 1914 the end of the war was still expected but none of the hopes nurtured since before the days of Isaac Butt and greatly magnified since 1912 were being realized. Irish Roman Catholics seeking commissions were discriminated against by the War Office, Ulster recruits were allowed their own units with distinctive badges and colours which were denied to others despite Redmond's efforts. Redmond's recruiting campaigns were praised but not rewarded with tangible results. There was still some hope that Redmond's Volunteers would be recognized as territorial or Home Guard forces, that new Irish regiments would be given their own colours and badges, that Redmond as the leader of an Ireland which, formally at least, had been granted measure of self-government, would be consulted in matters affecting Ireland. Under these circumstances the MacNeill Volunteers would have been an insignificant minority shortly to be dealt with by an Irish executive and the only true revolutionary leader in Ireland.

See John F. Burke, Outlines of the Industrial History of Ireland, (Browne and Nolan, Dublin, 1940), p. 334.
James Connolly, would have been ineffective. The Roman Catholic hierarchy which had been angered at the education grant proposal had been rallied to Britain's side by the reported German attacks on the Church in Belgium and by the end of 1914 both MacNeill's Volunteers and the Gaelic League were showing signs of disunity and confusion. The Irish Parliamentary Party had sustained severe shocks to its self-esteem and prestige but its extreme nationalist opponents did not appear to be in a position to take advantage of this.

The Southern unionists were clearly losers though the position of the Ulster unionists was not as clear. The passage of Home Rule even with assurances that they would not be coerced into it was a set-back but the defeat of the possibility of coercion was clearly a victory. An examination of the balance of forces at the end of the year would, therefore, lead one to conclude that the extremists and the Southern unionists had both lost ground while the reverses of the Ulster unionists and of the Parliamentarians had been to some extent compensated for by gains on other fronts. The organization of public demonstrations to try and persuade the Earl of Aberdeen to reconsider his decision to resign as Lord Lieutenant is testimony to the survival of loyal sentiments in the south of Ireland.²⁵⁰

²⁵⁰Cork Examiner, 31 December, 1914.
CHAPTER X

1915

The year 1915, the second year of the war, was characterized by an accelerating process of political alienation in Ireland. Those who did not join the British war effort became further alienated and increasingly frustrated while at the same time they were allowed a free rein to express this frustration through the continued toleration by the Government of anti-system organizations. However it must not be assumed that because Redmond's ascendancy was severely shaken during the year the result was a net transfer of allegiance from the Irish Parliamentary Party to Sinn Fein. Most Irishmen who became disillusioned with the Irish Party and its leadership simply withdrew from a conflictful political situation and did not embrace the opposition. By so doing, of course, they became more available as recruits to the extremist camp but it was only after the O'Donovan Rossa funeral in August that the ranks of the separatists showed any increase and even then the increase was very small though its effect was magnified by enlistment taking a large number of Irish Party supporters and unionists physically out of Irish politics. Even severe disillusionment with the Irish Parliamentary Party did not impel the mass of the Irish people to make more extreme political demands than the implementation of Home Rule as then defined and on the Statute Book.
The year began with Redmond's forces substantially intact and his popularity high. The failure of popular demonstrations to persuade Lord Aberdeen to stay on as Lord Lieutenant and the appointment of Lord Wimborne as his successor was only a very minor disappointment.¹ The Irish Volunteers, on the other hand, were continuing to experience difficulties. Michael Judge's resignation from the Executive of the Irish Volunteers had resulted in his being deprived of his captaincy in the movement by a meeting of thirty members of the company and this decision was promptly ratified by the Executive. The fact that the company consisted of one hundred and fifty men only increased and confirmed Judge's suspicions that the Irish Volunteers were being used by a small minority to serve their own ends. In a further letter to the Freeman's Journal, Judge said:

What really matters is the fact that a quintille consisting of Messrs. Pearse, O'Rahilly, Plunkett, Hobson, and M'Donagh, elected by themselves, and rejoicing in high-sounding titles, selected by themselves, are trying to assume autocratic control of the movement and claim that they supercede County Boards and all other elected bodies. Their Star Chamber methods are exemplified in my case.²

One extraordinary feature of the Judge affair is that the Irish Party seems to have made no effort to draw him back into the fold. Here is but another example of the Party's fatal arrogance towards all its opponents which led to the avoidance of any conciliatory moves to retain or to regain

¹Cork Examiner, 4 January, 1915.
²4 January, 1915.
support from those who came to doubt its policies. Michael Judge, a potential supporter, was left in a political limbo where so many Irishmen of broadly constitutionalist sympathies were to find themselves in 1915.

One hopeful early development from the point of view of the Redmondite forces was the agreement of the military authorities in Cork to allocate guard duties on local railway bridges to the Cork City Volunteers. The Volunteers assumed their first tour of duty from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. on the first day of January and as they marched off they were cheered and applauded by a crowd of well-wishers. The Cork Examiner greeted the move as the dawning of a new era for the Volunteer movement and added:

This example will probably be followed in a short time by the Volunteers of Dublin, Limerick, and other cities. The occasion, remarkable in its own way, was availed of to despatch a message to the Irish leader of loyalty and confidence in his policy.

But the rejoicing was premature and by the end of January the War Office repudiated the action of the Cork military command and the guard was cancelled with a shattering impact on the morale of the National Volunteers.

On the whole, however, January was a good month for the Redmondites. Dr. Foley, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin, advised Irishmen to ignore the extremists and at a meeting in Carlow he said:

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3 Cork Examiner, 1 January, 1915.
4 Ibid., 2 January, 1915.
5 Ibid.
6 Morgan, Parnell to Pearse, op. cit., p. 269.
The people of this country can afford to listen without emotion to the vapourings of the handful of extremists at home and abroad who still persist in permitting their hatred of England and the penal days to blind their minds and harden their hearts against all the healing and softening influences of the past fifty years.\(^7\)

On 8 January the Cork Corporation decided by a vote of twenty-four to three to withdraw the freedom of Cork earlier awarded to Kuno Meyer, the German philologist who had made a special study of the Irish language. The Corporation declared that their decision was taken because:

They realized their duties and responsibilities as members of that great Empire; that as such they had a claim on Great Britain as she had on them, and that they would not forsake but support her in her hour of trial and difficulty, as they had been doing, and would continue to do not only through their Irish soldiers, but every means in their power.\(^8\)

The same Corporation announced a few days later that the freedom of Cork would be conferred on Lord Aberdeen. The welcome to the city received by Lord and Lady Aberdeen was described as an unprecedented display of popular favour for a Lord Lieutenant.\(^9\) The extremist propaganda against recruitment went on unabated but largely to no avail and enthusiasm for the British cause was running so high that the Independent newspapers felt constrained to counsel restraint at least until it became known just how the promised Amending Act would affect the Home Rule Act.

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8 John J. Horgan, *Parnell to Pearse*, op. cit., p. 268.
9 *Cork Examiner*, 3 February, 1915.
There was some uneasiness being experienced because of the rapidly rising prices resulting from the war. The farmers in early 1915 were benefiting from these and in Belfast the shipyards and their supporting industries were profiting from the vastly increased need for new ships but in the urban areas of the South, including Dublin, wage increases were not compensating for the twenty percent increase in food prices reported in early 1915. Some of the discontent felt in Dublin was manifest when, following the sudden death of the Lord Mayor of Dublin, Alderman James Clancy, the Corporation elected another Redmondite in his stead but the Sinn Fein candidate, with Labour as well as Unionist support, obtained twenty-five votes causing some surprise to the Irish Party supporters.

The Volunteers who were conspicuous at this time were the National Volunteers, the Redmondite wing of the movement. They were in attendance at Alderman Clancy's funeral, they provided a guard of honour for Lord and Lady Aberdeen on the occasion of a presentation being made by the Dublin Corporation, as well as for Dr. Douglas Hyde at a Gaelic League meeting in

10 Irish Weekly Independent, 2 January, 1915.
12 Ibid., 6 February, 1915.
13 It is only in 1915 that the practice of referring to the Redmondite wing of the Volunteer movement as the "National Volunteers" or the "Irish National Volunteers" and to the MacNeill wing as the "Irish Volunteers" became established.
14 Irish Weekly Independent, 6 February, 1915.
Thurles where he criticized Lord Aberdeen for taking the title of Marquis of Aberdeen and Temair, "Temair" being based on "Tara", the sacred ground of ancient Ireland.\footnote{Irish Weekly Independent, 13 February, 1915.}

The Irish Party with its policy of open support for the British war effort received a severe shock from the tone of the 1915 Lenten Pastorals. Of the Roman Catholic Bishops of Ireland, only one, the Bishop of Cloyne, expressed satisfaction that Irishmen were volunteering in large numbers for the front and none of the pastorals specifically endorsed the British war effort. The \textit{Cork Examiner} reprinted the Pastorals of the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster and of the Bishop of Glasgow who lent unmistakable support to the British cause.\footnote{15 February, 1915.} The members of the Irish Roman Catholic hierarchy on the whole condemned war in general and specifically condemned Britain's ally, France, for making priests fight.\footnote{Freeman's Journal, 16 February, 1915.}

This attitude of the Roman Catholic hierarchy amounted to the loss of a very strong prop of the Irish Party's war policy. Certainly the hierarchy was not at this stage turning to Sinn Fein but in withholding support for the Irish Party policy it was manifesting and inevitably encouraging a similar general suspension of commitment which the Party could ill afford.

The Party's recruiting policy was coming under strong attack from Sinn Fein and other extremist sources. Periodicals
such as Arthur Griffith's *Scissors and Paste* could be silenced, as it was in March, but this only tended to confirm their value to the mass of Irishmen who were 'again the Government' even if they were not Sinn Feiners. In fact the Irish Party was in a difficult situation with regard to such publications; it opposed their views but also their suppression, knowing that they tended to be even more subversive of the Party position if suppressed rather than tolerated. On the other hand Sir Matthew Nathan felt that they had become intolerable at a time when censorship was imposed throughout the United Kingdom and when certain influential voices in Ireland were calling for their suppression. These voices included the unionists but also William O'Brien which meant that they could not be dismissed as purely anti-Home Rule manifestations.

William O'Brien was proving a thorn in the side of the Irish Party. The *Freeman's Journal* reacted to William O'Brien's pronouncements in a leading article which revealed the Irish Party's deep sense of frustration at his attitude:

> Unfortunately there is a serious side to Mr. O'Brien's absurdities. Whilst on the one hand he admits that "We have never hoped to abate the virulence of organs like these or of the special public for which they are written", on the other hand he calls for "most tender and gentle negotiation", which must be "strengthened by substantial practical concessions from the Nationalist majority". Whilst he condemns the Ulster threats of civil war and the "duty to sacrifice life and property" as "highly reprehensible", he writes himself that

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19 Ibid., 3 March, 1915.
"Ulster is in a position to enforce the redemption of that pledge by possessing an entire Army Division, sworn to its service, an unofficial army, of three times the size, sedulously drilled and dangerously armed, and a solemn pledge from the majority of the representatives of England to join them in resistance even if a majority at the general election should declare against them". And he adds that, "whenever the continental war concludes, Ireland will have to choose partition or civil strife, more or less bloody, unless the resources of statesmanship can devise some rational compromise in the meantime". The worst about it is that Mr. O'Brien stands practically alone in the mischievous policy of supplying the virulence of the Carsonites with platform ammunition.

Exaggerating in characteristic fashion what he calls "the Ulster danger", and endeavouring because of it to arouse what he describes as "patriotic alarm", he supplies further material to the Carsonites by his attacks on Irish Catholics and Nationalists. He says that "the ascendancy that is really threatened" is that of "a secret confederacy of politicians", bound by a "solemn declaration equivalent to an oath" and "composed exclusively of Catholics who have subjected themselves to its tests and pass words".20

The waning of clerical support, the suppression of Sinn Fein papers and the criticisms of the Irish Party by O'Brien's All-for-Ireland League might all have had an adverse effect on recruiting had not a personable young Irishman named O'Leary won the Victoria Cross and for a time at least rekindled enthusiasm.21 However, further irritants quickly followed.

The Dublin Chamber of Commerce at a meeting which was addressed by General Friend agreed to urge employers to encourage recruiting among their employees.22 This kind of

20 Ibid.
21 *Cork Examiner*, 20 February, 1915.
22 *Freeman's Journal*, 5 March, 1915.
activity was usually described in labour circles as "conscription by starvation" as the method of encouragement usually consisted in laying off workers. Also significant was another point which General Friend raised concerning the Volunteers. The General pointed out at this meeting that in the event of a German invasion of Ireland the Volunteers would not under international law be entitled to be treated as belligerents and if resisting invasion they could all be strung up from the nearest tree.²³ The reaction of the leadership of the Irish Party was to intensify its recruiting efforts and, at a review of Belfast National Volunteers attended by Dillon, Devlin and Colonel Moore, John Dillon declared that to be neutral in the war was tantamount to being hostile.²⁴ But the strongest move came from John Redmond speaking in Manchester to mark St. Patrick's Day, on Sunday, 17 March. He reiterated, in very strong terms indicative of some frustration, his earlier offer of the Volunteers for home defence. He said in part:

Twenty thousand men of the Regular Army, Kitchener's Army as it is called, who are supposed to be drilling and training for the front are at the present moment being absolutely wasted by being engaged in defending various points on the coast, defending railways, bridges, water works, and so forth, instead of being in their drill yards preparing themselves for the front. The whole of these men could be set free from that work at once, their places taken by Irishmen who are quite capable of the work, and I must say that I cannot

²³Ibid.
²⁴Irish Weekly Independent, 13 March, 1915.
conceive what reason there can be why this has not been done, and why the promise with reference to the organization and equipment of the Volunteers has not been carried out.\textsuperscript{25}

His plea involved a call for co-operation between the National Volunteers and the Ulster Volunteers as a unified force. Sir Edward Carson made his position perfectly clear within a few days in a letter to the \textit{Times} in which he said:

The latest figures of recruiting in Ulster were supplied to me towards the end of February. At that time the province of Ulster had contributed 32,000 recruits out of 1,580,000 or 21 per thousand of the population. Six counties of the north-east corner have given about 30,000 recruits out of a population of a million and a quarter. The remainder of the province - that is the counties of Monaghan, Cavan and Donegal - which are purely agricultural has, I regret to say, given less than 2,000 recruits. Belfast had given up to that time 18,600 recruits, a rate of 465 per 10,000 of the population. This has been increased to March 13th to 19,480. Owing to the large number of Admiralty orders, many men, who would be willing to enlist, are serving in the shipyards and cannot be spared. Several towns in Antrim and Down have exceeded this record. The hostile criticism of recruiting in Ireland should not be applied to Ulster. A joint appeal from Mr. Redmond and myself would be useless, mischievous, and lead to misunderstanding.\textsuperscript{26}

Sir Edward Carson had not replied directly to Redmond's call for co-operation at the home defense level but he had gone further declining to even co-operate in recruiting for the regular army. The rebuff to Redmond was clear but the statement once again underlined many of the factors which made Ulster different from the South and more closely linked with the rest of the United Kingdom. Redmond knew that the

\textsuperscript{25} \textit{Ibid.}, 20 March, 1915.

\textsuperscript{26} \textit{Cork Examiner}, 23 March, 1915.
survival of the National Volunteers was bound up with the question of War Office recognition. It seems a frequent assumption to-day that Redmond did nothing for his wing of the Volunteer movement after the split. That assumption is quite erroneous. He managed to keep his numbers up so that, despite the drain of enlistment and the shocks of the late summer of 1915, police estimates of this strength on the 4 October 1915 was still 117,702. This was a decrease of 60,000 over a one year period but it was still a respectable figure. 27 One of the methods employed by Redmond to keep up the numerical strength of his Volunteers was to encourage the formation of new companies in rural hamlets; these companies might well be very small but the magnitude of the effort is reflected by the fact that by mid-April 1915 there were over nine hundred companies of National Volunteers in Ireland, an increase of nearly six hundred since the split. 28 Redmond's problem was now to infuse this substantial body of men with a sense of purpose but all his attempts to do this had so far been thwarted by the War Office.

Redmond's authority in Ireland and even over his wing of the Volunteers was not such that he could order them directly into the regular army and the Irish Party leaders were well aware of the danger which conscription was to them politically.

27 Brendan MacGiolla Choille, ed., Intelligence Notes 1913-16, op. cit., p. 175.

28 Irish Weekly Independent, 10 April, 1915.
John Dillon, speaking in Claremorris, assured his audience that "there will be no conscription. No one will be forced to join the army who does not choose to do so, but those who do choose to join should be honoured by their countrymen, for they will be doing their duty by Ireland and fighting for her rights".\textsuperscript{29} Separatist propaganda on the other hand sought to capitalize on the fear of conscription. No opportunity was missed to point out that the leaders of the Irish Party had also assured Ireland that there would be no partition and yet the Amending Bill still hung as a threat over Home Rule and the leaders had agreed to at least temporary exclusion for Protestant Ulster. It was implied that they might do the same thing over conscription. The continued failure of Redmond's efforts to secure some form of War Office recognition for the National Volunteers was also unlikely to bolster confidence in the Party's ability to exert a continuing influence over the Government.

John Redmond made one final attempt at gaining official recognition of the National Volunteers in connection with a large-scale review in Dublin's Phoenix Park and with the National Volunteer Convention which followed the review in early April. Twenty-five thousand National Volunteers paraded through the streets of Dublin and in Phoenix Park, Redmond addressing the assembly from the reviewing stand declared that following such a spectacle it was inconceivable that the

\textsuperscript{29}\textit{Cork Examiner}, 27 March, 1915.
Government would not use such a force for the defence of Ireland.  

The following day at the Convention he returned to this theme. After saying that Ireland would be covered in "dishonour and contempt" if she did not participate in the war after being granted, through the Home Rule Act, a free constitution, he went on:

You all remember how on the 3rd August, in the House of Commons, I took on myself a grave and weighty responsibility; I took it upon myself to say that the armed forces of Ireland - I drew no distinction; I said north and south - would be willing to defend the shore of Ireland without the assistance of any of the regular troops of the Government. That offer was endorsed in every part of Ireland. I want to ask today what fatal infatuation prevents the war authorities from accepting that offer? Enlistment for purely home defense is going on all over Great Britain - in England, Scotland and Wales - and if not illegal there how can it be illegal here?

This was further evidence of discrimination against Ireland and was inevitably bound to reinforce feelings of relative deprivation. As one observer has said of Redmond:

But woo he never so wisely and wildly, Britannia, like Ulster, turned a deaf ear. The fact was that the British Ministers, and particularly Lord Kitchener himself did not trust Ireland in anything. They knew they had John Redmond in their pocket - they were not so sure whether John Redmond had Ireland in his - It was the unconscious instinct of British diplomacy towards Ireland. Perhaps in this they knew more of Ireland than John Redmond himself.

The effects of the British Government's attitude towards the National Volunteers were described by John Horgan, who said

30 Freeman's Journal, 5 April, 1915.
31 Cork Examiner, 6 April, 1915.
32 Shaw Desmond, The Drama of Sinn Fein, op. cit., p. 108.
that even in the first half of 1915

... it was already apparent that the days of the National Volunteers were numbered. Deprived of any raison d'être by the actions of the British Government, large numbers joined the British Army, in which many of them subsequently gained high distinction for gallantry. Soon the only armed force of national origin was the Irish Volunteers, most of whose leaders were already secretly committed to support Germany. The foundations of a great bridge between England and Ireland had been successfully destroyed.33

In fact the rate of enlistment for the British Army in the south of Ireland did climb following Redmond's unsuccessful bid to gain recognition for the National Volunteers. It did not reach the British level but it rose significantly. One reason for the rise was the “encouragement” given by employers to their workers. Pressure to do this was put on employers and was justified in the British Government's opinion by the fact that whereas in February the percentage of employees of industrial enterprises in Great Britain who had joined up was 15.4, in Ireland it was only 12.8, the only lower British figure being for Yorkshire where 12.6 percent had enlisted.34 But by April this pressure, the use for recruiting purposes of Irish recipients of the Victoria Cross and tours by the highly popular band of the Irish Guards produced a noticeable improvement in recruiting figures.35 The upsurge in enlistment and the undisguised admiration and enjoyment provoked by the band of the Irish Guards caused a

33 Parnell to Pearse, op. cit., p. 285.
34 Irish Weekly Independent, 10 April, 1915.
35 Freeman's Journal, 8 April, 1915 and Cork Examiner, 10 April, 1915. It is ironic that the newly appointed Colonel-in-Chief of the Irish Guards at this time was Lord Kitchener.
reaction from the Gaelic Athletic Association which extended its disqualification or ban to all who attended dances and any other entertainments promoted or given under the auspices of either the police or the military.  

The basic anti-government attitude of Irishmen had not changed but while John Hegarty was acquitted by a jury of possession of explosives against overwhelming evidence, public opinion clearly favoured the British side in the war and enlistment at this stage was in no way being discouraged. The General Council of Irish County Councils unanimously endorsed Redmond's war policy and the Freeman's Journal made use of the opportunity to express its contempt for "the little faction of superior patriots who have assailed Mr. Redmond and his colleagues for pointing out to young Irishmen the course which honour and duty commanded them to follow".  

Even the solid front of silent disapproval of the Roman Catholic hierarchy broke as Dr. Brownrigg, the Bishop of Ossory, came out in support of recruiting in Ireland. John Dillon, however, saw in the comparatively lower figures for Irish recruiting evidence of various factors including a conspiracy against Ireland. He explained his theory to a United Irish League audience in Glasgow where he said:

It has been said recruiting in Ireland has not been up to the mark amongst the Nationalists of the south. There were two reasons why recruiting had not been so great as in Scotland or Britain. There were not in the South of Ireland half the men of military age in proportion to the population

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36 Irish Weekly Independent, 10 April, 1915.
37 17 April, 1915.
38 Freeman's Journal, 19 April, 1915.
as in England or Scotland. This was due to the enormous steady drain of emigration, leaving largely old people and children. The second reason was that it took a little time to impress upon the people in Ireland their true situation, particularly those who had seen the blight of English rule there. To-day, however, with the exception of the very small minority alluded to, Ireland was substantially heart and soul with the Allies in the present struggle... There was another reason for indifferent recruiting in Ireland. It was a delicate subject, but he felt bound to speak of it. For the first six months of the war recruiting was carried on in Ireland by the War Office, and the conviction which grew was that they tried to get as few Irish Nationalists into the Army as possible, to repel them instead of recruiting them, so that certain powerful gentlemen connected with the War Office might be able to say - "Look at these Irish, they give no help at all". That was the charge made, and he believed it.39

In April the Irish Party was thus placed in a defensive stance towards both the Government and the separatist minority in Ireland but in April the Party policy still represented the prevailing attitude in Ireland - critical of the Government's treatment of Ireland but supportive of the British war effort and loyal, at least conditionally, to a Government which had passed a Home Rule measure. Lord Wimborne, the new Lord Lieutenant was cordially received on the whole. Cork Corporation as well as many other public bodies unanimously or with large majorities voted approval of welcoming addresses40 and the Lord Mayor of Dublin entertained Lord and Lady Wimborne at a luncheon at the Mansion House, the first time since 1880 that a Lord Lieutenant had been entertained by the Lord Mayor at the

39 Cork Examiner, 19 April, 1915.
40 Ibid., 24 April, 1915.
Mansion House. However the exigencies of war did create tensions and the Lloyd George budget presented at the end of April caused an uproar in Ireland. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was proposing to increase taxes on beer and spirits and the Irish Parliamentary Party reacted instantly decrying proposals which were destined to result in the destruction of a great Irish industry. Massive protest meetings were held in Dublin, Cork and other centres. Thousands assembled in Dublin's Phoenix Park for a three platform meeting where the following resolution was enthusiastically received and passed:

That this meeting of the citizens of Dublin records its most emphatic protest against the imposition of any further taxation in this country, and that we call upon the Irish representatives to prevent the extension to Ireland of the proposals submitted to the House of Commons on Thursday by the Chancellor of the Exchequer or any modification thereof; that the proposed impost would be an iniquitous injustice to this country, and would have the effect of extinguishing at least two important industries in regard to which Ireland stands pre-eminent and of throwing tens of thousands of workers out of employment, as well as of inflicting irreparable injury upon the agricultural interests of the country.

A Mansion House meeting the following evening passed a similar resolution. Indignation was running high, Dr. Fogarty, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Killaloe, was the first of a number of bishops to attempt to link, generally, not with great success, indignant outrage at taxes on the drink trade with continued enthusiasm for the temperance movement. The argument was

41 Ibid., 18 May, 1915.
42 Freeman's Journal, 30 April, 1915.
43 Ibid., 3 May, 1915.
44 Ibid., 4 May, 1915.
that drink among Irishmen is a curse and a blight but that among Englishmen it is a blessing and fully conforming to the divine plan for the universe. The Irish Parliamentary Party with such sterling support behind it took up the cause of the drink trade with vigour and successfully battled Lloyd George into dropping those tax proposals which would have affected Ireland. The entire performance left George Russell (AE) unfavourably impressed and he wrote at the time that

The land of the Gaels is in an awful state just now. We have had eruptions of publicans over Lloyd George which disgusts me with the name of Irishman. They say drink and nationality are bound up and The Freeman would make one believe that it is the duty of Christians to fight for the licensed trade.

Meanwhile the extremist anti-recruiting campaign had been intensified as a reaction to rising enlistment figures and Sean MacDermott was arrested at this time following an anti-recruiting speech in Tuam and a number of other prosecutions for similar offenses were also launched under the provisions of the Defense of the Realm Act. MacDermott's conviction won him stature as a minor martyr but in view of his role in the conspiracy to rebel being hatched by the Irish Republican Brotherhood his conviction to five months at hard labour for this speech could have been disastrous for the plans of the extremists. It has in fact been argued that his prominent

46 Ibid., 8 May, 1915.
49 Freeman's Journal, 10 June, 1915.
involvement in anti-recruiting activities was a mistake. Patrick Pearse, on the other hand, was calling for recruits but for the Irish Volunteers rather than for the British Army. In May he wrote an article which was surprisingly mild coming from the pen of a man who in the same month became one of the three members of an I.R.B. Military Committee formed to organize and foment an armed rising before the end of the war and using the Irish Volunteers for the purpose. Maureen Wall made the point that the setting up of this Military Committee was a decision taken by Clarke, Pearse, Plunkett and Ceannt and not a decision of the Irish Republican Brotherhood as such. Bulmer Hobson confirms this and described the Committee as "a secret society organized within a secret society".

In any case Pearse's public statement in May was restrained even though the fanatical note is discernible. In "Why We Want Recruits" he wrote:

We want recruits because we are sure of the rightness of our cause. We have no misgivings, no self-questionings. While others have been doubting, timorous, ill at ease, we have been serenely at peace with our consciences. The recent time of soul-searching had no terrors for us. We saw our path with absolute clearness; we took it with absolute deliberateness. "We

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50 See Rev. Charles J. Travers, "Sean MacDiarmada 1883-1916" Briefne Vol. III (1966), No. 9, p. 25

51 Diarmuid Lynch who was present at the setting up of the Military Committee dates it in May, see his The I.R.B. and the 1916 Insurrection, p. 25. Maureen Wall in "The Background to the Rising", op. cit., p. 177 dates it "in May or June 1915".

52 "The Background to the Rising", op. cit., pp. 177-178.

53 Ireland Yesterday and Tomorrow, op. cit., p. 72.
could do no other. We called upon the names of the great confessors of our national faith, and all was well with us. Whatever soul-searchings there may be among Irish political parties now or hereafter, we go on in the calm certitude of having done the clear, clean, sheer thing. We have the strength and the peace of mind of those who never compromise.\textsuperscript{54}

The kind of moral certitude described here by Pearse was becoming more appealing in 1915 than in the recent past. It has been pointed out that, while there are always people who feel or need to feel that they are in possession of ultimate values, conditions of crisis tend to affect large numbers who would not otherwise be susceptible to such appeals. The values of people socialized in a rigidly moralistic and religious tradition would also lead them to highly value absolute moral certitude.\textsuperscript{55} The war, the suspension of the Home Rule Act, the unknown nature of the Amending Bill, the fear of conscription and the rapid rise in prices all added up to a tense situation for Irishmen generally and while Pearse's appeal had no immediate results in terms of recruits it did publicize the existence of an alternative ideology, available to those for whom the crisis would become physically intolerable. In the latter part of his article Pearse deliberately set out to calm the fears of those who might think of the Irish Volunteers as openly revolutionary and he wrote:

If a moment comes - as a moment seemed on the point of coming at least twice during the past

\textsuperscript{54}Political Writings and Speeches, op. cit., pp. 120-121.

eighteen months - when the Irish Volunteers will be justified to their consciences in taking definite military action, such action will be taken. We do not anticipate such a moment in the very near future; but we live at a time when it may come swiftly and terribly. What if conscription be forced upon Ireland? What if a Unionist or a Coalition British Ministry repudiate the Home Rule Act? What if it be determined to dismember Ireland? What if it be attempted to disarm Ireland? The future is big with these and other possibilities.

Here Pearse was advancing the defensive policy of the Irish Volunteers on which the entire Provisional Committee was agreed but it should also be noted that it was a denial of the right of the British Government to do practically anything in Ireland. It was in fact far more subversive than the purely anti-recruiting activities which were the stock-in-trade of most separatists at this time and for which they were prosecuted while Pearse was ignored.

Pearse had referred to the possible actions of a Coalition Ministry and a further source of tension was introduced into Irish political life when persistent rumours of the likelihood of the formation of a Coalition Government reached Ireland. The Cork Examiner's initial report of these rumours mentioned that it was believed that Mr. Redmond had been offered a Cabinet post and that newspaper discreetly yet quite clearly urged him to accept if the offer was in fact made. Its leading article on the subject pointed out that:

Mr. Redmond's services in the Cabinet would be of immense value to Ireland in her political aspirations,

56 Political Writings and Speeches, op. cit., pp. 122-123.
as they would be to England at the present time in exhibiting to her enemies an absolutely united Ministry representative of every part of the United Kingdom. Whatever decision Mr. Redmond may arrive at after consultation with his trusted colleagues, will, we feel sure, command the approbation and support of the Irish people.57

The following day the paper returned to the topic again urging reasons for acceptance of a Cabinet post by Redmond.

It has been stated that the Irish leader has been invited to join the reconstituted Cabinet, and in that matter, as in all others which affect Irish interest, it may be assumed that Mr. Redmond will act with characteristic wisdom and patriotism. As far as one may foresee it is intended that the War Cabinet shall be representative of all interests, and if it be the case, as the Premier has declared that being represented in its councils is not to be taken in any quarter as an indication of surrender or compromise of political ideals, it is difficult to see what objection, if any, could be raised against Ireland's participation in the councils which will be chiefly occupied in considering the best means of bringing the war to a successful end... There are very good reasons why Ireland should be represented in a reconstituted cabinet.58

Redmond's decision not to join the coalition was reported on the next day without comment.59

The Irish Parliamentary Party would later maintain that they could see no need for a coalition Government and from the point of view of Ireland it is true that there were no compelling reasons for the move but the Prime Minister was confronted with a crisis in the munitions industry and with the Gallipoli campaign which was rapidly transforming itself

57 19 May, 1915.
58 20 May, 1915.
59 21 May, 1915.
into a disaster. Both of these invited opposition attacks which the Government felt unable to handle and a coalition involving the Opposition directly in the search for solutions to these difficulties as well as making use of all the political talent available to prosecute the war presented itself as attractive to the Prime Minister. Redmond as leader of a substantial party in the House of Commons had indeed been offered a post in the new Cabinet. In reply to this offer he sent the Prime Minister two telegrams. In the first one he simply refused the offer saying: "While thanking you, I feel sure you will understand when I say the principles and history of the party I represent make the acceptance of your offer impossible".  

Redmond was a captive of the long tradition of non-involvement in British government, the so called "self-denying ordinance" which had been adopted by Irish Nationalists wanting to avoid a repetition of the Sadleir-Keogh episode when these two Irish politicians had reputedly been seduced from their independent principles and corrupted by the offer of office under the Crown. This was a long tradition which was well established and well understood in Ireland. Redmond, under attack for consenting to the temporary partition of Ireland and for his recruiting efforts, felt unable to ignore this rule in the prevailing Irish climate of opinion where disillusionment caused by War Office policies, heavy casualties at the front, lack of official recognition of the exploits of

60 Denis Gwynn, The Life of John Redmond, op. cit., p. 423.
Irish troops, rising prices, etc., was increasing. Redmond's second telegram to the Prime Minister revealed some of his other difficulties. This time he told the Prime Minister: - "In view of the fact that it is impossible for me to join I think most strongly Carson should not be included. From Irish point of view inclusion would do infinite harm and make our efforts to help more difficult". 61 Again from a purely Irish viewpoint Redmond was quite correct and subsequent events demonstrated the harm to Anglo-Irish relations which flowed from the inclusion of Sir Edward Carson in the Ministry. However, in the midst of war the Prime Minister could not be expected to consider the question from the Irish point of view. Had Sir Edward Carson been merely the leader of a minority Irish party, the potential leader of the Opposition to Redmond's Irish executive there would have been a strong case for his exclusion from the Coalition Cabinet but Carson was a major figure in the Conservative Party quite independently of his role in Ireland, indeed he might have been the leader of that Party had his concern for Ireland not prevented him from seeking that post. Not to have invited him to join the coalition under these circumstances might have destroyed the plan before it was even attempted. The combination of Redmond's inability to join the Cabinet with the impossibility of ignoring Carson was to drastically curtail Redmond's influence on the Government as well as his popularity in Ireland.

61 Ibid.
Before the Coalition Government's formation was formally announced, however, the Irish Volunteers were subject to a sharp reminder that their popularity with the ordinary people of Ireland was not improving. On Whit Sunday, 23rd May, the Irish Volunteers organized an excursion and parade in Limerick. Six hundred men came from Dublin, two hundred and fifty from Cork and numerous smaller contingents from elsewhere in Ireland. In all twelve hundred men paraded. Many of the extremists leaders were present as this was in fact the first attempt by the Irish Volunteers to publicly display their strength. As they approached the army barracks the marching men were jeered at by British soldiers shouting from the windows but the inhabitants of Limerick were not so restrained and they not only jeered, but threw stones, bottles and jam jars at the marchers. Eamon de Valera and some of the Cuman na mBan women who had accompanied the Dublin Volunteers had to take refuge in a public house. The Volunteers were eventually rescued and put on their respective trains by a combined force of the Arch-Confraternity of the Holy Family and the Royal Irish Constabulary. Redmond's difficulties so far had not proved to be the Irish Volunteers' opportunity though there can be no question that Redmond's hold on Irish public opinion was slipping and that the formation of the Coalition Government was a further severe blow.


When the formal announcement of the setting up of a Coalition Ministry including Sir Edward Carson was made, the Cork Examiner loyally accepted John Redmond's decision not to join it but it displayed obvious distress at the thought that henceforth Irish interests would be represented to the Government by Sir Edward. The Freeman's Journal printed two editions that day; in the first edition it warmly endorsed Redmond's decision to remain aloof from the new Cabinet, in the second edition it was able to announce the composition of the Coalition Government. The inclusion of Sir Edward Carson was not welcomed and the leading article declared:

The whole business is a scandal of the first magnitude at the present moment and most discreditable to those who forced it on. The crown on the scandal is the appointment of Sir Edward Carson. Here is a gentleman who a few months ago was threatening to break every law upon the Statute Book, who was challenging the guardians of the law in Ireland to put him in the dock, who assailed the present Lord Chief Justice of Ireland because from his place on the bench as one of his Majesty's judges he attempted to see justice done on the Belfast rioters, and he is selected as the chief administrator of the criminal law of England.

The composition of the new Cabinet was thirteen Liberals and nine Unionists, which was a fairly severe deterioration of the position from an Irish point of view but worse was to come when changes in the ministry below Cabinet rank were announced. On the Monday following the formation of the new

64 26 May, 1915.
65 26 May, 1915.
Cabinet rumours spread through Ireland that a change in
the Lord Chancellorship of Ireland was imminent. The rumours
as reported in Ireland were:

The announcement was made on Saturday by some of
the London newspapers that, as part of the back-
stairs arrangements that have been concluded for
the alleged purpose of "carrying on the war", the
Home Rule Lord Chancellor of Ireland was to be
removed, and Mr. James Campbell, K.C., the legal
advisor of "The Provisional Government", appointed
in his stead. Incredible as the rumour would appear
to be, and irreconcilable with the Prime Minister's
statement upon the formation of the Coalition, there
is reason to believe that the announcement is well
founded.66

There followed a deluge of resolutions condemning the new
coalition, Sir Edward Carson's appointment and the appointment
of James Campbell from United Irish League meetings, Ancient
Order of Hibernians meetings and local government bodies.
The Freeman's Journal published a leading article which re-
flected the exacerbated frustrations of Irish Parliamentary
Party supporters and it commented that:

It is almost impossible to believe the story that
has received currency in the English Press, which
states that arrangements have been concluded which
will supercede Lord Chancellor O'Brien in the Irish
Chancellorship, and that he is to be replaced by
Mr. J. H. Campbell, M.P. Irish public opinion can
scarcely be expected to stand such a proposal, and
if an attempt be made to put it into practice there
will be an end to the political truce as far as
Ireland is concerned. It is scarcely necessary to
recall the fact that Mr. Campbell was the last
Coercionist Attorney General in this country, that
he was one of the moving spirits in the late Ulster
revolt, and that at present he occupies the position

The leading article then asked somewhat despairingly "Is Sir Edward Carson not enough?" One source of apprehension which was only publicly referred to a few days later was that, with the entry of Unionists in the Cabinet, the number of Ministers known to favour conscription had greatly increased.

By June 1915 the initial enthusiasm which had seen hundreds of thousands join the armed forces of the Crown was waning and not only in Ireland. The costs of war in terms of life, limb and health were impressing themselves upon those who had so far stayed behind. Flanders mud was a poor substitute for shining armour and yet even more were required. The coalition brought into office men who felt that conscription was a simpler, more effective and perhaps even fairer solution to the shortage of recruits than band concerts, hoardings and white feathers. The leaders of the Irish Parliamentary Party were well aware that conscription in the service of the Crown was totally unacceptable to the mass of their Irish Roman Catholic constituents. The imposition of conscription would bring out the Irish Volunteers and place the people at their backs whatever the people might think of the war. The extremists who were determined on a bloody sacrifice would have welcomed such a development. Their anti-recruiting activities were contributing in a modest measure to
increasing the likelihood of conscription and of an Anglo-Irish war. The Irish Party taking a strong stand against threatened conscription passed a unanimous resolution opposing it. 69 Meanwhile John Redmond had written to the Prime Minister referring to the long catalogue of discouragements attributable to the indifference or hostility of the Government and also pointing with some pride to Ireland's recruiting effort. He then wrote on:

Then, suddenly, without a moment's notice, this Coalition has been launched. We have been the allies of the Liberal Party and the Liberal Government for several years; but this step was taken without any consultation whatever with or notice given to, your Irish allies; and the first intimation received by me included the statement that Sir Edward Carson, the leader of the small Unionist Party of Ireland, who had constituted himself an apostle of physical force against law was to be included in the new Cabinet. I was offered, with great kindness, by you a place in the Cabinet - some unknown and unnamed English Office. I was not offered a place in the government of my own country.

and then followed a strong protest at the Campbell appointment. 70

The Irish Party's efforts were successful and it was decided not to appoint J. H. Campbell as Lord Chancellor of Ireland.

The Irish Party issued an announcement saying:

That we have learned with satisfaction that the protests of this Party have been successful in preventing the Lord Chancellorship of Ireland being handed over under the Coalition to a Unionist, and especially to a Unionist with the record of Mr. Campbell. That while we claim that in view of the Home Rule Act being upon the statute book the principle of Coalition should not in practice be extended to the Government of Ireland, we abstain

69 Cork Examiner, 10 June, 1915.

in view of the extraordinary dangers of the present crisis, from taking any hostile action against the new Government in connection with the appointment of a Unionist to the Attorney-Generalship of Ireland.

That we wish to convey to our fellow-countrymen our assured conviction that nothing which has occurred in any way jeopardizes the certain coming of the Home Rule Act into operation on the conclusion of the war, provided always that in the meantime the people perfect and keep intact the national organization and preserve the essential unity of the country.

That in our opinion the only real enemies of Home Rule to-day are the professing nationalists who create feelings of panic, and seem desirous in a moment of difficulty to weaken the hands of the national leaders, and to discredit and injure the national party and the national organization.71

The Irish Party obviously felt aggrieved by the Government's action but no statement which it made could now efface the feelings of unease and tension about the future of Home Rule which spread throughout Ireland. These feelings were naturally encouraged by the separatists though they were not immediate beneficiaries of them. It was symptomatic of these feelings that the number of prosecutions under the Defense of the Realm Act increased fairly sharply at this time.72 While Mr. Campbell's appointment was still being rumoured, the Volunteer Silver Band of Skibbereen refused to play off twenty-four recruits who were leaving the town to join the Royal Munster Fusiliers.73 This was not likely to improve recruiting. Also unsettling was the reaction of such a firm friend of the Party among the Irish

71Cork Examiner, 11 June, 1915.
72Irish Weekly Independent, 12 June, 1915.
73Cork Examiner, 28 June, 1915.
Roman Catholic Bishops as Dr. Fogarty of Killaloe who wrote to Redmond of "a great revulsion of feeling" and added "Home Rule is dead and buried and Ireland is without a national party or national press. What future has in store for us God knows...". \(^74\) Robert Kee commented on the significance of the Bishop's letter that

...the Bishop of Killaloe's bitter comment revealed at least a growing weariness and political sensitiveness where Irish nationalists had little to build on but trust, and the foundations of that trust suddenly began to seem uncertain. The periodically repeated rumours of the introduction of a conscription scheme which might include Ireland further increased this sensitiveness. Irish nationalist pride insisted that the very considerable contribution Ireland was making to the Imperial war effort should be honoured for what it was - a spontaneous and voluntary gesture with conscious political implications for a future of Home Rule. To ride roughshod over this, turning such contribution into a mere legal obligation exacted ultimately by force from Westminster at a time when an indigenous Irish Parliament was actually on the statute book, seemed not only an insult recalling all the other insults Ireland had received from Britain in the past but also a direct threat to Home Rule itself. \(^75\)

The creation of the Coalition Government alone represented a downward trend in the fortunes of the Irish Parliamentary Party and one from which it was never to recover though that was not apparent at the time. The Party's influence on purely Irish affairs remained high because Augustine Birrell continued to consult Redmond and Dillon but the Party was no longer the holder of the balance of power in the House of Commons. However illusory this may have been in terms of practical political

\(^{74}\) Quoted in Robert Kee, The Green Flag, op. cit., p. 528.
\(^{75}\) Ibid., pp. 528-529.
power it did give the Party confidence in itself and inspired the confidence of its followers. The Party's enemies, unionists and conscriptionists were now part of the Executive and while the Party had been successful in preventing the Campbell appointment it had been forced to strain its resources in order to do so. As Redmond had pointed out to the Prime Minister the Party had not been consulted about the setting up of the Coalition, and that was a symbol of a new relationship. In fact it was the war and the exigencies of war which robbed the Irish Nationalists of their position of influence; the coalition was no more than the practical demonstration of the fact that the Irish Question was no longer central to British politics. Redmond and his Party were left with little to do but to try and prevent conscription from being imposed on Ireland and even here it was clear that the decision to conscript or not to conscript Ireland would ultimately be decided on the basis of a calculation of the likely costs of imposing it weighted against the returns available. Principles and the Home Rule principles among them became victims of the war. The Irish Parliamentary Party at Westminster became little more than a tedious nuisance while in Ireland they attempted to repress any political initiative which threatened to disrupt the functioning of the war machine. This was all for the purpose of safeguarding a Home Rule Act the full extent of which was unknown but in the pursuit of which most of the Party leaders and members had spent their entire adult lives. Now
that it had apparently been won they were on the defensive both at home and at Westminster. They were also growing old and tired.

Labour had become increasingly involved in politics in opposition to the Irish Party since 1913. A small minority of the working class were following James Connolly into a closer and more explicit alliance with the Irish Volunteers. The majority opposed the Party and fought against the recruiting tactics of the employers and of the Party without linking up with the Irish Volunteers. In late May, James Connolly moved printing presses and machinery into Liberty Hall so as to print the *Workers' Republic* from a location which was less likely to be subject to police raids than were the premises of most commercial printers. The move was made surreptitiously because of the opposition of most of the members and officials of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union. When the machinery, under guard by the Irish Citizen Army, was discovered its prompt removal was demanded on the grounds that it invited the suppression of the Union and the closing down of Liberty Hall. Connolly was finally able to secure approval of its remaining by exploiting the spirit of hostility to the police which had been generated by the 1913 labour unrest.  

In *The Reconquest of Ireland* which was published in 1915, James Connolly gave some of his justifications for the closer

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links which he was forging with the extreme nationalists.

Speaking of intellectuals and the working class he wrote:

In other European countries the Socialist movement had brought these two elements together, in organized defensive and aggressive warfare against the brutal regime of the purse; but in Ireland the fight for national freedom had absorbed the intellect of the one, and prevented the development of the necessary class-consciousness on the part of the other.

But when the belief that some form of national freedom was about to be realized spread in Ireland, and consequently the minds of all began to turn to consideration of the uses to which that freedom might be put, the possibility of co-operation between the two classes became apparent to the thoughtful patriot and reformer.

The incidents accompanying the great labour struggle furnished just the necessary common denominator to establish relations between the two.77

Having thus rationalized a common front with the extreme nationalists, Connolly was now ready to begin planning for the combined use of the Irish Citizen Army and the Irish Volunteers but it seemed obvious that the labour movement as a whole was unlikely to follow him.

Following the relocation of his printing works, Connolly began publishing a series of articles on revolutionary warfare which ran from the 29th May until the 24th July. The first article dealt with the Moscow Insurrection of 1905 where Connolly made the point that 1,500 men with 80 rifles had held out for nine days against 18,000 trained and fully armed troops.78 In the following weeks he dealt with the possibilities of amateur soldiers defeating the best

77 pp. 250-251.

78 Workers' Republic, 29 May, 1915.
generals as in the Tyrol,79 and of a territory treated as a conquered province rather than as an allied state defeating its political masters as the Belgians had done the Dutch. In this particular article Connolly described the charges pressed by Belgians against Holland in terms which would have been familiar to his Irish audience:

Holland in its rule over Belgium was accused by the Belgians of a systematic campaign against every expression and manifestation of Belgian national life. It was alleged that it penalized the native language of Belgium, and gave undue official preference to the Dutch, that it sought to place Dutch officials in all posts to the exclusion of equally well qualified Belgians, that it unduly favoured Dutch industries by legislation and retarded Belgian, and that in every possible way Belgium was treated more as a conquered province than as an Allied state.80

From the point of view of later Irish history one of the most interesting of this series of articles was the one in which Connolly dealt with the Paris Insurrection of 1848. He examined the tactical dispositions of the insurgents and wrote:

To enumerate here the places and districts fortified would be a useless display of names, but sufficient to say that the insurgents had drawn a huge semi-circle around a vast portion of Paris, had erected barricades in a practically continuous line all along their front, had carefully prepared the houses and buildings at tactically strong points, and were now applying to their service everything within their lines that foresight or prudence could suggest.

Two great buildings served as headquarters in the various districts. The headquarters of the North were in the Temple, those of the South in the Pantheon,

79 Ibid., 5 June, 1915.
80 Ibid., 12 June, 1915.
and in the centre the Hospital of the Hotel Dieu had been seized as the strategical bureau of the whole insurrection.\textsuperscript{81}

The final instalment consisted of a summary of the lessons to be drawn from the preceding articles in which particular emphasis was placed on the value of securing strong buildings as a pivot for the insurrection and Connolly concluded by pointing out that:

The general principle to be deducted from a study of the examples we have been dealing with, is that defense is of almost overwhelming importance in such warfare as a popular force like the Citizen Army might be called upon to participate in. Not a mere passive defense of a position valueless in itself, but the active defense of a position whose location threatens the supremacy or existence of the enemy. The genius of the commander must find such a position, the skill of his subordinates must prepare and fortify it, the courage of all must defend it. Out of this combination of genius, skill and courage alone can grow the flower of military success.

The Citizen Army and the Irish Volunteers are open to all also wish to qualify for the exercise of these qualities.\textsuperscript{82}

The tactics recommended here were quite at variance with what Eoin MacNeill had in mind for the Irish Volunteers. He and Bulmer Hobson preferred the pattern of guerilla warfare to that of an urban insurrection moving quickly to the defensive but they were unaware of the plan of the Military Committee who, more concerned with the spectacle than with victory, were placing their primary emphasis on a beau geste in Dublin.

The rest of the labour movement in Dublin had not embraced

\textsuperscript{81}Ibid., 17 July, 1915.

\textsuperscript{82}Ibid., 24 July, 1915.
the revolutionary faith preached by Connolly but as a group they too were becoming increasingly alienated politically. The pressure used by the employers of Dublin to encourage their workers to enlist and which had not been criticized by the Irish Party contributed to the development of hostility to the Party and to recruiting. The death of Mr. Nannetti, the working class member of the Irish Parliamentary Party for College Green in Dublin, necessitated a by-election to fill his seat. This was held in June, 1915 and the Irish Labour Party, Connolly's creation in which he had lost interest as he drifted away from constitutional action, contested the seat. At a meeting in Beresford Place, opposite Liberty Hall, P.J. Ryan declared that "they were prepared to support the candidature of anybody who might be selected to oppose the recruit of the recruiting sergeant John Redmond, whether that recruit be Mr. J. D. Nugent or Mr. Briscoe". In the end Mr. Nugent was victorious but Mr. Farren, the Labour candidate trailed by only 629 votes reflecting the growing discontent of Dublin Labour with the Irish Party.

This growing discontent of Dublin labour was at least partly attributable to the declining living standards of the Dublin working classes. The living conditions of Dublin workers had been instrumental in fuelling the disturbances of 1913 and the strike and lock-out of that year had ended in a

83 Freeman's Journal, 7 June, 1915.
84 Ibid., 14 June, 1915.
defeat without easing working class conditions. The out-
break of war had resulted in a modest improvement for some
workers but rising prices had since more than wiped out the
early rise in wages. A survey contrasting the position in
June 1915 with that of June 1914 revealed the extent of
deterioration.

The average weekly wage of the unskilled Dublin
labourer was then eighteen shillings. It is now
in a considerable proportion of cases but not the
majority, nineteen to twenty shillings. The usual
weekly budget of the family showed at that time
the following items of expenditure: - Food, 11s.
8d.; rent, 3s.; coal and light, 1s.9d.; insurance,
6d.; soap, 2d.; sundries, 2d.; leaving a margin
of 9d. for tobacco, train fares, etc., total 18s.

A corresponding weekly budget would now show the
following expenditures: - Food, 16s.10½d. to 17s.
0½d.; rent, the same 3s.0d.; insurance, the same,
6d.; coal and light, 2s.10½d.; soap, 3d.; sundries,
3½d.; pocket money, 1s.0d.; total 23s.9½d. to 23s.
10½d.

The increase in the food bill is thus 45 per
cent, and in the total budget 33 per cent.85

Wages had simply not risen by thirty-three percent since
June, 1914 and the consequence, as the report pointed out,
was that the calorie intake of the Dublin labourers slipped
below 3,000 calories per man per day which was considered
as the necessary intake to maintain working capacity. It
had gone from 3,072 calories in June 1914 to 2,768 in June
1915.86 The rapid wartime rises in food prices in particular
were still, in June 1915, benefiting agricultural Ireland as

85 W. H. Thompson, War and the Food of the Dublin Labourer,
op. cit., pp. 1-3.
86 Ibid., p. 7.
well as the small town and village merchants whose fortunes were intimately tied to agricultural prosperity but whatever initial gain the Dublin workers had made were quickly overtaken and they found themselves in a worse situation than before the war and even before the 1913 labour troubles. This was bound to provoke hostility to the Government in power and to the Irish Parliamentary Party supporting that Government. War as a modern phenomenon has generally been more popular among urban than rural masses but in Ireland the aggravated deprivation falling upon the urban masses of Dublin in addition to the alienation resulting from the labour troubles and the lack of indication of how victory in war would improve their lot tended to smother enthusiasm for war in Britain's defense. In the country, where there was prosperity, the feeling that the war had little to do with Ireland also prevailed and the tensions which had attended the passage of the Home Rule Bill and which had not been reduced by its suspended status left Irish farmers little disposed to embrace with enthusiasm the British cause.

The reduction of the Irish Parliamentary Party's role to that of watch dog at Westminster and recruiting agency in Ireland left Ireland with a feeling of political stagnation. Until the winning of Home Rule there had been some satisfaction to be derived from the slow progress of the Party. Now all was stopped and only uncertainty remained. The Party had at once both achieved its goal and been deprived of the fruits
of victory. The achievement had put an end to any movement of the Party which could be regarded as progressive and the denial of the reality of Home Rule was profoundly frustrating. Had this occurred in peace time the discontent would have been far more vocal and positive action would certainly have been taken but the war provided for many an opportunity for alternative action of a positive nature and enough people in Ireland felt that victory in war was a necessary prelude to renewing the Home Rule struggle to provide the British army with a proportion of recruits from Southern Ireland which was, at least until mid-1915, comparable to that of rural England. A description of the attitude of Professor Thomas Kettle probably applied with lesser force and perhaps instinctively rather than rationally to a large number of those who volunteered:

Like many Irishmen who donned the khaki uniform at that time, among them the well-known Irish poet, Francis Ledwidge, Kettle was not moved by hatred of Germany as such, still less by love for England, and certainly not by any love for war. These men saw in the rising Prussian militarism a threat even greater than that of England, more ruthless, more anti-Chritian and more deadly efficient. And, besides, Kettle had seen the terrible things that lay in the wake of the German advance through that other small Catholic nation, Belgium. There were some who spoke of England's difficulty as Ireland's opportunity, and we can sympathize with their outlook. But to a man of wide vision and actual experience, it seemed as if England's defeat must mean the defeat of Europe, and only a wishful thinker could suppose that Ireland would be spared the Dark Ages to follow.87

For those who remained in Ireland and who were passive supporters of John Redmond there was little to be done. It was these Irishmen who inspired a Roman Catholic priest, the Very Reverend D. Dineen, of Charleville to remark in an address entitled "The Great School of Patriotism" delivered to the Maynooth Union on 24 June, 1915 that:

Contrasting the young men of '67 with the young men of today, the striken corpse of a '67 man radiates more wisdom, more dignity, more vitality, more inspiration, more helpful national energy than the other man could in the full stature of his palpitating manhood. 88

At this juncture one of the "young men of '67" died in New York. Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa, an old Fenian, whose activities in the United States had involved the dispatching of terrorists to England in the 1880's and whose politics had been described by no less a dedicated Irish revolutionary as John Devoy as being "of the lunatic kind", 89 died after a long illness. The Freeman's Journal, reflecting the characteristically ambiguous attitude of the Irish parliamentarians towards earlier extremists, devoted almost a full page of adulation to him. 90 On the next day it reproduced the following dispatch:

The 'Daily Telegraph' New York correspondent telegraphed yesterday that O'Donovan Rossa was in his declining years a mild and genial old gentleman, inclined rather to lament than boast of the part he had taken in preaching the doctrine of assassination in Ireland's fight for Home Rule. I knew Rossa very well in recent years, and talked with him daily for over a week, when I was his fellow passenger on a

90 30 June, 1915.
transatlantic trip. Since then the conditions of Ireland have improved considerably, but even then Rossa did not hesitate to say that the Irish would be well advised for the future to remain at home rather than risk the disappointment, possibly failure, which would be entailed to most of them if they continued to migrate to the United States as in former years. Rossa then, and more recently has admitted that the land conditions in Ireland, and more especially the relations between landlord and tenant, compared very favourably with what may be found here and indeed in any other part of the world. The last time I saw Rossa he was tottering on the brink of the grave. "When I die", he said to me, "you might tell the English people I have fought a good fight according to my views, and long ago lost all hatred let alone prejudice against the British Government". He hoped the Irish would stand united in helping to fight Germany the common enemy of civilization.  

How much of this was planted in order to lessen the impact of anti-recruiting propaganda is not clear but the Irish Parliamentary Party had some cause to pay homage to O'Donovan Rossa for he had been one of John Redmond's Irish-American supporters and on the occasion of Redmond's last visit to New York he had been on the platform to welcome the Irish leader. However the parliamentarians were outmanoeuvred and the extremists seized upon Rossa as a symbol of resistance to England. Before this became obvious, however, Boards of Guardians, Executives of the United Irish League and local government bodies in large numbers had passed votes of sympathy to the relatives of O'Donovan Rossa in terms which eulogized him, thus firmly confirming that Rossa was held to be an Irish hero by Redmond's supporters. The Lismore Guardians for example described him as a forerunner of the Home Rule movement  

91 Freeman's Journal, 7 July, 1915.  
now led by John Redmond.\textsuperscript{93}

The Party was therefore in no position to raise objections to the burial of Rossa in Glasnevin following a public funeral, plans for which were announced in mid-July.\textsuperscript{94} The ubiquitous Bulmer Hobson, singning himself "Honorary Secretary of the Committee for the O'Donovan Rossa Funeral", wrote a letter to the press inviting public bodies, national organizations and bands wishing to render homage to the departed hero to communicate with him.\textsuperscript{95} Following this and the announcement that O'Donovan Rossa's widow was placing the funeral arrangements into the hands of "Mr. T. J. Clarke, an old friend of Rossa's, President of the Wolfe Tone Memorial Committee",\textsuperscript{96} the stream of votes of sympathy and the eulogies became scarcer, though the Cork Ancient Order of Hibernians voted sympathy with Rossa's relatives and the Dublin Corporation allowed a lying in state at the City Hall.\textsuperscript{97}

The funeral was scheduled for the first of August, and until the very last days of July, when all the arrangements had been completed, there was no serious endeavour by the extremists to challenge openly the image of Rossa as a convert to Home Rule which had been played up by the \textit{Freeman's Journal} in particular. But a few days before the funeral, after the body

\textsuperscript{93} \textit{Cork Examiner}, 6 July, 1915.

\textsuperscript{94} \textit{Irish Weekly Independent}, 10 July, 1915 and \textit{Cork Examiner},

\textsuperscript{95} \textit{Cork Examiner}, 16 July, 1915.

\textsuperscript{96} Ibid., 22 July, 1915.

\textsuperscript{97} Ibid., 27 July, 1915.
had arrived and the service in the pro-Cathedral, complete with Irish Volunteer guard of honour had been held, Mary O'Donovan Rossa vigorously denied the earlier story from the New York correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* and she declared that "Rossa was, as he said of himself in the dock, an Irishman ever since he was born, and I can testify that he was the same unconquerable Irishman, breathing the same unalterable desire for the absolute freedom of his country and its utter separation from England that he breathed in the dock". The *Freeman's Journal* tried to bolster up the Party position depicting Rossa as a genuine Irish hero while the current extremists belonged to a totally different and mean spirited tradition, but the parliamentary Nationalists were ultimately undone by their own adulation of O'Donovan Rossa. It was difficult to balance the heaping of praise on a man who had been the instigator of a terrorist campaign of bombing and assassination in England while condemning as too extreme those whose anti-English activities were carried out only in Ireland and were confined, publicly at least, to anti-recruiting propaganda. The Irish Party once again was involved in rhetorical praise of violence, providing normative justifications for it while being at the same time committed to a constitutional policy. There were now crucial differences, however, the Party had lost the leverage in British politics.


which had made constitutionalism successful and there was in Ireland a body of armed, openly organized, men who could make good use of such justifications.

The funeral was handled with all the Irish genius for such occasions. The Irish Volunteers had been in charge of the ceremonies from the beginning and the National Volunteers, though participating, found that they were not an integral part of the arrangements. According to the reminiscences of a participant, the Irish Volunteers took over the city of Dublin and the police abandoned the streets to them.\(^\text{100}\)

Batt O'Connor recalled that the Irish Volunteers and the Irish Citizen Army provided an armed guard around the coffin and with the help of the Fianna regulated the large crowd waiting outside the City Hall. Special trains brought in people from all over Ireland. The National Volunteers did parade in the cortege to Glasnevin as did representatives of almost every public body and other organizations in Ireland but the affair was a triumph for the Irish Volunteers.\(^\text{101}\)

Nowhere was this more obvious than at Glasnevin itself where Patrick Pearse in an unadorned Irish Volunteer officer's uniform delivered the funeral oration. Father O'Flanagan had already laid the ground work in the remarks which he made at the lying in state when he declared:

\(^{100}\)Eilis Ni Chorra, "A Rebel Remembers", Capuchin Annual, 1966, p. 293.

Do not believe those who always hated the principles for which O'Donovan Rossa stood, and who despised all the ideals of his lifetime - do not believe them when they tell you that he changed in his old age. Rather believe those who tended at his bedside, and who were faithful to him till the last, to whom his memory is dearer than anything else in life. And they can tell you that the principles O'Donovan Rossa had were the same as the principles of his youth, and that the Ireland O'Donovan Rossa loved to the end was an Ireland free - absolutely free - from any external control whatever.102

Pearse's funeral oration was clearly based on the assumption that Rossa at his death was still an unrepentant Fenian and it is this oration, more than Rossa's actions, which enshrined him in the hagiology of republican Ireland. Pearse's grave-side panegyric has been described as "a virtual declaration of war against Britain".103 In it Pearse declared:

And if there is anything that makes it fitting that I rather than some other, I rather than one of the grey-haired men who were young with him and shared in his labour and in his suffering, should speak here, it is perhaps that I may be taken as speaking on behalf of a new generation that has been rebaptized in the Fenian faith, and that has accepted the responsibility of carrying out the Fenian programme. I propose to you then that, here by the grave of this unrepentant Fenian, we renew on baptismal vows; that, here by the grave of this unconquered and unconquerable man, we ask God, each one for himself, such strength of soul as belonged to O'Donovan Rossa.104

This said while wearing the uniform of the Irish Volunteers was clear enough. The speech was reproduced without comment in the Freeman's Journal though not in some of the other

102Cork Examiner, 11 August, 1915.
104Political Writings and Speeches, op. cit., p. 134.
One effect of the funeral was that the tide of public opinion which had been running strongly against the Irish Volunteers was stemmed.

The Irish Volunteers were not making any considerable gains in support at this time. The situation in Cork has been described as barely maintaining itself in mid-1915 and the orders issued to those parading through the city to commemorate the Howth gun-running made reference to popular hostility and appealed to the support of "National Ireland" whereby it was argued that the people of Ireland really supported the Irish Volunteers regardless of what they said or did. At a time when the people of Ireland jeered and stoned Irish Volunteer parades, spat upon their collection boxes and shunned individual Volunteers, the "national soul" myth was necessary but after the O'Donovan Rossa funeral there was a suspension of judgement and larger numbers began to respond to this myth. Others, who did not succumb to the myth, were in the Irish Volunteers because it appeared to be one good way to keep out of the war. It has recently been argued that:

Although it was the Irish Volunteers who furnished the core of the little army later called the Irish Republican Army, a good many who liked to strut at Volunteer ceremonial parades had no notion of fighting anywhere if they could help it. Startled and shaken by Redmond's forthright move to get them into the real thing they welcomed the split which enabled them without any loss of prestige, to exchange the dread and

sure prospect of fighting abroad for a much more comfortable and vague prospect of fighting at home in the rather unlikely event of a German invasion.\textsuperscript{107}

Robert Kee has pointed out of the Irish Volunteers at this time that:

This relative failure to attract much support is all the more remarkable, given the drop in emigration from Ireland which had taken place since the beginning of the war. None of the new stay-at-home population seemed yet attached to the Irish Volunteers in any significant quantity. Recruitment for the British Army on the other hand was proceeding at the rate of over six thousand per month.\textsuperscript{108}

James Connolly had thrown the strength of his small Irish Citizen Army into the funeral and he explained their move in an article which declared that:

In honouring O'Donovan Rossa the workers of Ireland are doing more than merely paying homage to an unconquerable fighter. They are signifying their adhesion to the principle to which Rossa till his latest days was a living embodiment - the principle that the freedom of a people must in the last analysis rest in the hands of that people - that there is no outside force capable of enforcing slavery upon a people really resolved to be free, and valuing freedom more than life. We in Ireland have often forgotten that truth, indeed it may be even asserted that only an insignificant minority of the nation ever learned it. And yet that truth once properly adopted as the creed of a nation would become the salvation of the nation.

Then followed a discussion on the nature of the slavery of the soul which left little doubt as to the contempt with which Connolly viewed the compromises of the Irish Parliamentary Party and he went so far as to question the right

\textsuperscript{108} The Green Flag, op. cit., p. 535.
The burial of the remains of O'Donovan Rossa in Irish soil and the functions attendant thereon must inevitably raise in the mind of every worker the question of his or her own mental attitude to the powers against which the departed hero was in revolt. That involves the question whether those, who accept that which Rossa rejected have any right to take part in honour paid to a man whose only title to honour lies in his continued rejection of that which they have accepted. It is a question each must answer for himself or herself.

But it can neither be answered carelessly nor evaded.

The Irish Citizen Army in its constitution pledges its members to fight for a Republican Freedom for Ireland. Its members are, therefore, of the number who believe that at the call of duty they may have to lay down their lives for Ireland, and have so trained themselves that at the worst the laying down of their lives shall constitute the starting point of another glorious tradition - a tradition that will keep alive the soul of the nation.

We are, therefore, present to honour O'Donovan Rossa by right of our faith in the separate destiny of our country, and our faith in the ability of the Irish Workers to achieve that destiny.109

Connolly comes very close here to sharing Pearse's mythical vision - the vision of Ireland's soul saved through the sacrifice of lives for her sake. The statement in any case constitutes with Pearse's oration a joint declaration of war though no date for the war was set. Amazingly the authorities continued to look away.

Meanwhile Redmond continued to make reassuring speeches about Home Rule as the one to a group of Australian Roman Catholic priests whom he assured that the Coalition presented

no danger whatever to Home Rule and that "the Home Rule Act automatically comes into operation at the end of the war. And nothing can prevent that happening". But whatever he might say he could not prevent mounting tensions when for the first time a Volunteer was prosecuted for possession of a rifle and when Irish Volunteer organizers were served with expulsion orders. The Irish Party leaders were finding themselves in an awkward dilemma. They were being attacked and fiercely denounced as traitors to Irish ideals by the various forces usually identified as Sinn Fein yet it was impossible for them to call on British help to silence their critics. They were expected to protest whenever Irish Volunteer organizers, who were usually Irish Republican Brotherhood organizers as well, were in trouble with the authorities. They found themselves having to defend their most virulent enemies' right to attack and destroy them.

One Sinn Fein inspired move which came close to placing the Irish Party in difficulty was the resolution signed by thirty-nine citizens including a number of Redmondite members of the Dublin Corporation and addressed to the Lord Mayor. The resolution read:

We, the undersigned, request the calling of a special meeting to consider the following resolution: - that we demand as the right of the Irish nation that the Home Rule Act agreed to and accepted by the English Government, and signed by his Majesty King George V, be put into operation for all Ireland on September 17th next.

110Freeman's Journal, 2 July, 1915.
The special meeting was called but by the time it could be held the Nationalist signatories had been informed that the resolution was inspired by Sinn Fein and designed to embarrass Mr. Redmond. The *Freeman's Journal* did ask why Sinn Feiners who declared the Home Rule Act to be totally valueless should suddenly become so anxious for its passage.  

The remarks of Mr. John Ryan, mover of the resolution, warrant extensive quotation because they were designed for broad appeal and he touched on many of the sources of frustration and tension then being experienced in Ireland. They illustrate the kind of arguments which were being directed to supporters of Redmond to wean them of their allegiance. He declared that the object of the resolution was

... to assert the right of the people of Ireland to govern themselves, and at the same time to draw attention to the opportunity which now exists for a settlement of the Home Rule question. Were it not for the intervention of this terrible war the Home Rule Act would now be in operation. Owing to the war the operation of the Act has been deferred. Without legislation it cannot come into force before the 17th of September, but any date after that date it can come into operation if the Government so wish, as all they have got to do is to make an Order in Council directing that steps be taken, and I believe that the present is an opportune time to move in this matter, as obstacles which blocked the way before the war have disappeared. If there is a particle of gratitude left in England no English statesman can overlook the part that Ireland has played and is playing in this war. I feel that if the present Government were to apply their minds to the task they could evolve a settlement which would be satisfactory to all the people of Ireland. Why do I say that? Twelve months ago the Liberal Government, although pledged to Home Rule for all

15 July, 1915.
Ireland, declared that the coercion of Ulster was unthinkable, and a party in England, openly avowed that they would resist by force any Act establishing an Irish Parliament. To-day the leaders of the revolt are Ministers of the Crown. The inclusion of these men in the Cabinet was a great shock to the people of Ireland, and Mr. John Redmond has stated that he saw no reason for the creation of a Coalition Government. But there it is, and coalition or no coalition, the rights of Ireland must be respected. No doubt the political truce entered into at the outbreak of the war has been broken by the creation of this Government as far as Ireland is concerned. But it had already been broken by the Liberal Government when they tried to impose unwarranted and unjust taxation on the brewing and distilling industries of this country. The voice of Ireland was heard against that unwarranted and unjust taxation and the proposal was withdrawn. If the voice of Ireland is heard again, may not a Coalition Government also consider it good policy to listen to it? It is true, as Mr. Redmond has said that no harm can befall the Home Rule cause if the people of Ireland act unitedly. Indeed, the Home Rule Act coming from the Government of which Sir Edward Carson and his friends are members may prove to be the means of uniting the people of Ireland. There are people in Ireland who would accept from such a Government a measure which they would reject with scorn if it came from the Liberals.

The seconder, Mr. Foley, was at pains to point out that the resolution was not an attack on the Irish Party but it was clear that some dissatisfaction with the Party's performance over Home Rule was implied and that passage of such a motion invited further reverses for Mr. Redmond. The appeal, however, was well made and included no overt expression of hostility or even criticism of the Irish Party but by implying that Sir Edward Carson could conceivably be a consenting party to the implementation of Home Rule it clearly aimed at the impossible. Mr. O'Bierne, one of the Nationalist members of
the Corporation who had signed the resolution proposed the following amendment:

That the Home Rule Act agreed to and passed by the Imperial Parliament, and signed by his Majesty the King, constitutes a solemn treaty between the British and Irish nations by which the British nation has recognized the national right of Ireland.

That we congratulate Mr. John Redmond and the Irish Party on their success in securing this settlement in face of terrible and unlooked for difficulties, and we look with confidence to Mr. Redmond and the Irish Party to select the best and speediest means and the proper moment for bringing the Home Rule settlement into operation of the Irish Parliament.

The debate on this amendment was acrimonious with charges that subterfuge had been resorted to in order to induce some of the Party supporters to sign. Alderman T. Kelly's bitter declaration that no Irishman worthy of the name would vote confidence in Mr. Redmond revealed the gulf which existed between those who had originally signed the resolution. Eventually the amendment was accepted by a vote of 30 to 22 and then passed as the substantive motion of the meeting by 31 to 16. The gallery was crowded with Sinn Fein supporters hoping to witness the discomfiture of the Redmondites and the passing of the motion resulted in pandemonium with Mr. O'Bierne being physically assaulted by members of the audience.\textsuperscript{114}

When Redmond received the Dublin Corporation resolution he replied to the town clerk affirming once again that Home Rule was certain and could not be undone. He also condemned those who would put pressure on the Government during the war.\textsuperscript{115}

\textsuperscript{114}Irish Weekly Independent, 17 July, 1915.
\textsuperscript{115}Cork Examiner, 22 July, 1915.
John Dillon addressing a United Irish League convention in Limerick a few days later made much the same point, warning that those who made precipitate demands might well risk Home Rule for another generation. He also had a warning for the Government against any attempt to impose conscription upon Ireland. The reason for this warning had in fact little to do with the Government and was really a response to Sinn Fein moves. Following the Dublin Corporation set-back, Sinn Fein had revived its anti-conscription crusade. A conference of agencies and groups which were of a more extreme nationalist cast than the Irish Party had been held in Dublin under the guise of being an anti-conscription conference. What infuriated the leaders of the Irish Party was that at such conferences the more or less explicit assumption that the Party was unreliable in its opposition to conscription was always made. This particular conference sent around to public bodies throughout Ireland a resolution against conscription. The result was almost invariably a vote of confidence in John Redmond but the device did provide an opportunity for the extremists to test their strength, to keep the issue alive and possibly to sow doubts in the minds of some. The Freeman's Journal was led to protest against "A resolution, engineered by a number of Sinn Feiners" which was being circulated and to affirm that "there are two points on which Irish Nationalist opinion is fully and emphatically made up, viz., that we shall

\[116\text{Ibid., 26 July, 1915.}\]
not have conscription and that no clique or coterie shall be allowed to use the anti-conscription cry in the interest of faction". The latter element of that determination was difficult to ensure and Sinn Fein forces in the months ahead, with generous assistance from Lord Kitchener, were to do their utmost to spread fear of conscription throughout Southern Ireland.

Another blow to the Irish Parliamentary Party, though an indirect one was the overt take-over by the extremists of the Gaelic League. For some time the extremists had commanded a majority on the Executive of the League and they had occasionally made use of League platforms or publications for discreet propaganda, but they had not so far made any attempt to change the officially neutral position of the League on political questions. In 1915 the Irish Republican Brotherhood decided that the time had come to move the League away from its predominantly academic concerns into taking a definite separatist political stance. The move was not favoured by all the members of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, some foresaw that to drag the League into politics was likely to be more detrimental to the Irish language revival than it would be politically beneficial but they were overruled. One of these was Sean T. O'Kelly who was later President of the Republic of Ireland and who commented, many years after these events that the decision

117 9 August, 1915.
... weakened seriously a magnificent organization which had brought together people of every class, creed and condition to devote themselves to the task of reviving the moribund Irish language. In uniting all Irish people for the salvation of the old tongue and particularly in bringing North and South together for this essential object the League was accomplishing great things for Ireland.\textsuperscript{118}

The resolution which was eventually passed at the Gaelic League Ard Feis in Dundalk began by reaffirming the non-political and non-sectarian character of the League but then went on to declare that the League was to devote itself to realizing "the ideal of a Gaelic-speaking and free Irish nation".\textsuperscript{119} Effectively the resolution put an end to the non-political if not to the non-sectarian character of the League. Dr. Douglas Hyde, one of the founders of the Gaelic League and its long time president, who on one previous occasion had prevented the open take-over of the League by extremists and who had always been most insistent on political neutrality, resigned. Eoin MacNeill, the Vice-President of the League and through the Irish Volunteers far more closely linked with the extremists than Dr. Hyde, supported the move. One of MacNeill's biographers has reported that:

This was the one episode in his career that MacNeill afterwards most regretted. He later felt and said that the League should have adhered to its programme, and that its failure to do so 'was bad for the objects of the League, and had other bad results in the time that followed'. Seen in perspective, this crisis was not only bad but probably fatal for the objects of


\textsuperscript{119}Sean O'Luing, \textit{I Die in a Good Cause}, op. cit., p. 57.
the League, which never really recovered.\textsuperscript{120}

The change in the League drove out a number of genuine language enthusiasts who had remained in the League despite its political leanings towards separatism as long as these were not made the official policy of the League. The adverse effects of this on the Irish Parliamentary Party were not due to a major shift in policy but to the fact that the League now became an overt propaganda weapon of the Irish Republican Brotherhood.

The problems of the Irish Party were becoming more serious. An astute modern student of politics has observed that "Propaganda cannot paint a picture which conflicts with reality as it is seen by individuals in the light of their basic needs".\textsuperscript{121} Self-government in some form had assumed the character of a basic need for southern Roman Catholic Irishmen by 1915. The reality which they perceived, due to the Coalition and to the War Office in particular, was not that of being part of a self-governing political unit and Redmond's assurances on the question of Home Rule were carrying less and less conviction for the Irish people. On the other hand the extremist propaganda which described English rule as tyrannical did not strike them as a picture of reality either. Most people still wanted Home Rule and were not convinced that total separation from Britain was either realistic or worth a war to obtain.


\textsuperscript{121}James C. Davies, Human Nature in Politics, op. cit., p. 134.
Most of the Southern Irish remained also in basic sympathy with Britain in the war and so they increasingly withdrew from the political morass and tended to their own affairs. Yet, here again they were pursued by discontent and tensions and in late July were voiced the first complaints of what was to become a chorus of discontent concerning alleged discrimination against Ireland in the allocation of munitions and other war material contracts.  

A further problem for John Redmond was created by the attitude of the Roman Catholic Bishop of Limerick, Dr. O'Dwyer. The Bishop's sympathies had been manifested in the past on the side of those who took a more radically nationalist position than that of the Irish Parliamentary Party and he also abhorred the war itself in addition to his basic lack of sympathy for the British side. In mid-August he addressed an open letter to John Redmond in which he referred to the Pope's call for a truce so that an end to the war could be negotiated. The appeal was generally looked upon by the belligerents as well-meaning but impractically naive. Dr. O'Dwyer, however, appealed to Redmond to use his influence on the British Government to obtain compliance with the Pope's wishes. In the course of his letter he said:

Before this disastrous war, by your wise and upright statesmanship, you deserved well of your country, and brought her to the very threshold of Home Rule. It may be in God's providence that you, a Catholic Irishman, are destined to render her, and the whole world, a still greater service, by leading the English government to

take the first step, at the word of the Pope, towards the re-establishment of peace on earth. 123

Redmond made no reply. Indeed he could hardly reply that he was prepared to ignore the wishes of the Pope nor was he prepared to admit openly that, following his refusal to enter the Coalition Cabinet, he had lost all influence on the Government except on questions directly affecting Ireland. But this snub of the Bishop of Limerick was to cost Redmond some support in the months to come and in December, when his fortunes had sunk lower with the threat of conscription it would come again to haunt him. 124

In August Redmond did make an effort to regroup his forces and United Irish League and National Volunteer conventions were held throughout Ireland to re-activate support but these efforts were impeded by the continuing prosecutions initiated under the Defence of the Realm Act against Irish Volunteer organizers which aroused considerable indignation. Limerick Corporation passed a resolution criticising the arrests and deportations and Dublin Corporation passed a similar resolution by thirty-two votes to one indicating a high level of abstention. Alderman Byrne at the Dublin Corporation meeting made the point that "It was a most extraordinary thing that for the same crime or organizing Sir Edward Carson was given a seat in the Cabinet and made Attorney-General for England, while these young Irishmen were sent to prison". 125

123 Ibid., 12 August, 1915.
124 Infra p. 476.
125 Freeman's Journal, 21 August, 1915.
greater cause for apprehension was that after some considerable delay the Kilkenny Corporation and the Swinford Board of Guardians had adopted the Sinn Fein inspired anti-conscription resolution.  

A few days later Redmond, speaking at a Waterford United Irish League Convention, tried to assuage the growing apprehensions and the uneasiness of his constituents and he declared his unshakable conviction concerning the solidity of the Home Rule settlement while trying to inspire his supporters with greater confidence. He confidently declared that:

Ireland never stood in a stronger position than she does today and the position of National Self-Government is an impregnable one. All we have to do, believe me, is to exhibit some of those qualities which are necessary for a free people - steadfastness, seriousness of purpose, patience and courage...though the times are anxious, and in a sense horrible times Ireland as a nation has no reason for despondency.  

But Redmond was impotent in the face of many of the causes of discontent to which was shortly to be added resentment at the lack of official recognition for the Irish troops at Gallipoli.  

The Ulster Unionists did nothing to ease Redmond's difficulties and in September their determination to live up to the Ulster Covenant once the war was over was reaffirmed. Shortly before "Ulster day" a manifesto was issued by the Ulster Unionist Council which stated:

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126 Irish Weekly Independent, 21 August, 1915.
Since the outbreak of the war the Ulster Unionist Council have faithfully observed the party truce, and following the example of their leader, Sir Edward Carson, have devoted themselves entirely to war service on behalf of their country, whether in the ranks of his Majesty's forces or in other capacities, and so long as the war continues they intend to preserve their attitude while at the same time adhering to their Covenant, which will be fulfilled when the war has been brought to a successful termination. It is therefore not proposed to hold any meetings or observances of a political kind in connection with the anniversary of Ulster day, which falls on Tuesday, 28 September. The Council would therefore recommend that the loyal people of Ulster should observe the anniversary either on the exact date, or upon the nearest Sunday, as a day of humiliation and intercession with the Lord of Hosts to preserve our King and Empire, safeguard our gallant soldiers and sailors, and crown our arms with victory. The statement has the approval of the Primate of all Ireland, the Moderator of the General Assembly, and Rev. G.R. Wedgwood of the Methodist Church.129

The one positive feature of this was that there were no celebrations to mark Ulster day in the North of Ireland which would probably have spurred on bitterness and renewed sectarian violence. The unionists of Southern Ireland also became heavily involved in the war effort. The able men of fighting age went off to war and the others took up war work behind the lines. On the whole they had not found the National Volunteers very congenial but many found themselves co-operating with Redmondites in various supporting activities. Patrick Buckland has observed that:

The drift of southern unionism in the war thus away from the old policy of negative unionism. There were still unionists who remained hostile to nationalists and Irish nationalism, but unionist organization in the south was disintegrating, and whereas the overshadowing of the Irish question by

129 Cork Examiner, 16 September, 1915.
the war enabled southern unionists to look again at the Irish situation, their experience of co-operation with the nationalists in the war effort enabled and encouraged them to re-appraise in a favourable light the claims of Irish nationalism. 130

All was thus not defeat and reverses for the Irish Parliamentary Party and the breaking down of unionist resistance even if only confined to the south was a significant development which was, however, overshadowed by the growing disaffection in the ranks of its traditional supporters.

One cause for apprehension was the increasing pressure which was being put on the Prime Minister to impose conscription. Military Members of Parliament in particular, when returning on leave from the front and paying brief visits to the House of Commons, almost invariably called for the introduction of a scheme of compulsion to provide more men for the war. Lord Kitchener himself, speaking in the House of Lords, gave indications that he at least was contemplating the possibility of conscription; this being quite at variance with the assurances of the Prime Minister in the House of Commons. 131 This provided Redmond's domestic opponents with further ammunition. The Irish Parliamentary Party could only tenaciously reiterate its continued objection to conscription as a matter of principle in Great Britain as well as in Ireland, but the fears generated by pro-conscriptionist propaganda were ably exploited by the Irish extremists to the detriment of the


In September further disillusionment inevitably resulted from the anticipated publication of the Order-in-Council postponing the advent of Home Rule for a further six months. This helped to ensure the success of a Phoenix Park demonstration to demand the release of Pim, McCullough, Blythe and Mellows. The fact that no formal protest at their arrests had been made by John Redmond was instrumental in the defeat by 10 to 6 votes of a motion to present an address to Mr. Redmond by the Killarney Board of Guardians. The 1915 budget was also a source of discontent though the changes were not totally unexpected. Income tax went up by forty per cent and the duty on tobacco, tea, cocoa, coffee, chicory, dried fruits and sugar was increased by fifty per cent. In a country where income, particularly in the cities, had lagged far behind that in England, these increases amounted in many cases to considerable hardship and this promoted even more strenuous efforts to secure more munitions contracts. These efforts were at best only partly successful. The Dublin Munitions Committee obtained assurances that a Branch office of the Ministry of Munitions would shortly be opened in Dublin foreshadowing a substantial increase in the number of Irish firms involved in munitions production. These firms then numbered one hundred and seventy. The Cork Corporation met

132 Irish Weekly Independent, 18 September, 1915.
133 Ibid., 25 September, 1915.
134 Cork Examiner, 21 September, 1915.
specifically to discuss the question of obtaining more War Office contracts and the *Cork Examiner* commented that:

Nowhere in Ireland has the call for men been more nobly answered. Ireland will have to pay heavily for the war for many a long day, and it would be a crowning injustice if we were not to get some share of the temporary prosperity which in the Kingdom generally will have to compensate people for the lean years that must come after the war. In this instance too the case is so overwhelming that we can scarcely conceive that the local claims will not be promptly and generously recognized by the Government.\(^{135}\)

But as Denis Gwynn pointed out the pledges of the Government that Ireland would receive her fair share of war work, "like so many others, were to remain unfulfilled. Ireland neither gained the industrial compensations which were enjoyed by Great Britain, nor was brought into direct contact with war work as Redmond had asked".\(^{136}\) The point has also been made that "every available source from which the British government could procure munitions was fully availed of with one exception, that exception was Ireland".\(^{137}\) The fact that the Irish Parliamentary Party proved unable in time to rectify this clear case of discrimination further damaged its prestige. It may have been fear of what the Irish might do with the munitions which led the Government to avoid giving contracts to Irish firms but if the decision was dictated by the anticipation of possible violence there was an element of self-fulfillment in it. Overt discrimination with its concomitant

\(^{135}\)October, 1915.

\(^{136}\)The *Life of John Redmond*, op. cit., p. 437.

feelings of relative deprivation served to heighten the potential for violence in Ireland.

The lack of publicity for Irish war efforts at the front which had been a continuing complaint was given greater salience by the revelation in early October that of the eighty Victoria Crosses so far awarded during the war, twenty-two had been won by Irishmen.138 This reinforced also the conviction of many that Ireland was doing as much as could be expected of her and it tended to stiffen the determination not to have conscription. In October, the Dublin Trades Council was persuaded to pass a resolution which rejected conscription and in effect tended to discourage recruiting. The resolution read:

The Dublin Trades Council, while not disposed to obstruct in any way those persons who, through loyal zeal for the British Empire, might be inclined to volunteer for active service abroad, at the same time call upon the organized workers to join either the Citizen Army or the Irish Volunteers, as being the best means to avert conscription.139

Labour had not supported Redmond since 1913 and this resolution was a further indication of lack of confidence in his ability to avert conscription as well as a repudiation of his entire attitude towards enlistment. Labour dissatisfaction was high in October which facilitated passage of such a resolution. Labour disputes tied up the Dublin docks as the shipping companies tried to make use of the Munitions Act to compel dockers

138Irish Weekly Independent, 9 October, 1915 and 16 October, 1915.
to work at less than agreed rates of pay. The police were called in and picketing strikers were roughly handled where-upon Connolly ordered fully armed members of the Irish Citizen Army to take up picket duty. Once again the government backed away from a confrontation with an illegal army and the dispute was quickly settled but not without providing evidence of the utility of resorting to violence.\footnote{See R. M. Fox, \textit{James Connolly: The Forerunner}, op. cit., p. 181.} During this dispute William Martin Murphy unsuccessfully urged the Association of Master Carriers to lock out members of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union.\footnote{See C. Desmond Greaves, \textit{The Life and Times of James Connolly}, op. cit., p. 308.} This came at a time when the pressures on employers to release men for the armed forces were increasing and it added significantly to fears of conscription among Dublin workers.

These fears were exacerbated when Dr. Crozier, the Church of Ireland Primate declared that:

> Some form of National Service must come, I believe, to force the slackers and the shirkers to bear their part in the coming death grip. What right have they to plead that they are safe because men and women whose shoes they are not worthy to unloose are sacrificing everything save honour. And if National Service does come, God save Ireland from the degradation of being excluded from its scope.\footnote{\textit{Freeman's Journal}, 15 October, 1915.}

The growing understanding between Irish nationalists and Southern unionists was to be strained from now on by totally incompatible attitudes towards conscription. What from the Nationalist side was perceived as the intolerable coercion
of a free people whose right to self-government had been formally recognized appeared to the other side as the only way to adequately defend their country and to safeguard their honour and dignity. What was to one a determination to preserve earned rights was to the other craven poltroonery and there was no bridging such divergent perceptions. The hostility of Dublin labour towards the Government was further reinforced when lack of Treasury support forced the Dublin Corporation to suspend the scheme to replace slums already torn down.\textsuperscript{143}

By late 1915 voluntary recruiting was drying up all over the United Kingdom, not only in Ireland, and fears of conscription were evidently becoming more realistic and yet the Irish Party could do nothing but redouble their recruiting efforts. The Irish Volunteers gained marginally from this situation as did the Anti-Conscription League. Sinn Fein itself on the other hand had failed to attract those who were withdrawing their active support from the Irish Parliamentary Party and, on the occasion of the anniversary of Thomas Davis which was celebrated at Sinn Fein headquarters, the position of the Sinn Fein movement was described by Alderman Kelly as being "on the rocks" and he added:

\begin{quote}
I don't see what is to be done. Sinn Fein has kept the lamp of nationality alive for the past eight or ten years, in Dublin at any rate, and without it there would be no Volunteers of any kind. We are now left in the position that we cannot pay the rent or taxes on these premises.\textsuperscript{144}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{143} Ibid., 26 October, 1915.
\textsuperscript{144} Freeman's Journal, 14 October, 1915.
The Irish Party also derived some satisfaction from the resignation of Sir Edward Carson from the Coalition Cabinet and Irish Nationalist newspapers greeted this news as a confirmation of John Redmond's wisdom.\textsuperscript{145} The vindication of Carson later on was not commented on to any extent.

In October the pressure for recruits was stepped up. The United Irish League in Dublin County was reorganized into what was designed to be a more efficient recruiting agency. At the meeting where this reorganization took place it was revealed that so far 81,408 Irishmen had joined as voluntary recruits, 44,689 Roman Catholics and 36,719 Protestants. This was clearly a far higher proportion of Protestants than of Roman Catholics. Another figure which was given to the meeting was, while only an estimate, a really shocking indictment of the social conditions in Ireland. It was revealed that 80,000 volunteer applicants had been rejected as unfit.\textsuperscript{146} It can safely be assumed that this figure contained a much higher proportion of Roman Catholics so that, while Roman Catholics had in fact been markedly more reluctant to enlist than Protestant Irishmen, the recruiting figures did overstate the relative support for the war effort in the two communities. When these figures were published the Church of Ireland Bishop of Down, Connor and Dromore was quick to point out that one half of the total recruits from Ireland

\textsuperscript{145} See for example the \textit{Freeman's Journal}, 20 October, 1915.

\textsuperscript{146} Ibid., 19 October, 1915.
came from his diocese and that this number included a large number of Roman Catholics which may reveal as much about the more salubrious conditions of Belfast as about the patriotic enthusiasm of the area. 147

The Lord Lieutenant, as Director General of Recruiting in Ireland, held a press luncheon at the Viceregal Lodge where he applied for more recruits. He referred to the fact that:

There were in Ireland, after a year of war, 36,510 males of military age, who were described as rendering domestic or ill-defined services, or as persons without occupation. Of these 23,481 were unmarried. The males of military age in the trading and commercial classes numbered 36,510. Apart from farmers working their own farms, there were 120,726 farmers' sons, of whom 119,281 were unmarried, and 97,651 farm labourers of whom 77,242 were unmarried. 148

It was clear that the pressure was being built up and full page recruiting appeals with cut-out coupons calling for 50,000 Irish recruits were placed in newspapers. Inevitably tensions mounted and the anti-recruiting campaign of the extremists was also intensified. Trials by jury or by Irish nationalist magistrates sometimes turned into a farce. James Dalton was prosecuted for anti-recruiting activities on the charge of making a statement likely to prejudice recruiting for saying that "those who have volunteered or would volunteer to fight for England are only traitors, cowards and prostitutes". The court rules that this was an anti-conscription remark and

147 Ibid., 27 October, 1915.
148 Ibid., 29 October, 1915.
not anti-recruiting. Cases were still resulting in convictions, however, as did the prosecution of Thomas Desmond FitzGerald at the Bray Petty Sessions. Sir A. Meldon is reported as having declared that FitzGerald's speech "was a most seditious one, repudiating the English Government, and would be punished with death in any other country". In Ireland it was punished with six months imprisonment and the O'Rahilly rushed up to FitzGerald and shook him warmly by the hand.

The Gaelic League was at this time experiencing some difficulties due to its move into politics. In mid-October an attempt had been made at a Coiste Gnotha meeting, chaired by Eoin MacNeill, to re-affirm the non-political character of the League and had been defeated. This led to the resignation from the Executive of a number of non-separatist members and to a condemnation of the actions of the League by Dr. Harty, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Cashel, who claimed that the League was violating assurances and guarantees which he had been given that it would remain non-political. But another point of view was put forward by Joseph T. Dolan of Ardee who wrote to the **Freeman's Journal** that:

> You allude to the governing body of the Gaelic League having come largely under the control of the Sinn Fein political party. There are a number of Sinn Feiners on the Coiste Gnotha, but except for one or two who were apparently elected from political partisanship, they all got their place there by the vote of us anti-Sinn Feiners because of their...
energetic service to the language movement. The majority of Irishmen throughout the country who take an interest in the language are supporters of the Irish Party. They are irritated by the occasional interventions of Sinn Fein political prejudice at Gaelic meetings, but they recognize that the more responsible Sinn Feiners in the Gaelic League have no part in these offensive indiscretions, and that even amongst the Sinn Feiners who show themselves at times irresponsible or aggressive there are earnest and active workers in the language cause whose co-operation is far more useful than the indifference, or at least half-hearted sympathy, given it by most Nationalist politicians.153

The Irish Republican Brotherhood extremists were benefitting from the confusion in the popular mind which identified all those more extreme than the Redmondites on the national status of Ireland as Sinn Feiners. The Gaelic League became an ideological transition agency. The more committed Party supporters withdrew but a number remained in the League and were gradually converted to separatism.

A further significant development of late 1915 was the curtailment of emigration. Opportunities for emigrants abroad had not been very good in the years immediately preceding the war and there was consequently an unusually high number of young men in Ireland in 1914 and 1915. Many of these enlisted but by no means all and those who emotionally were prepared to emigrate to distant lands had even less reason than most Irishmen to consider the war as being their affair. As one commentator has pointed out:

The earliest and most primitive Irish reaction towards the threat of conscription was the revival of emigration in 1915. This attempt was stopped by an outcry in the British Press, followed by

153 8 November, 1915.
hostile demonstration, against would be emigrants at Liverpool and by the refusal of the crews to carry them overseas. These landless young men, somewhat euphemistically called "farmers' sons", who shared very little in the war-time profits of the established farmers, were to form part of the raw material of the Irish Republican Army of the future. 154

What occurred on the Liverpool docks was that 650 Galway emigrants destined for the United States were jeered at by a crowd who looked upon them as shirkers from military service. The English crowd, faced themselves with the unsettling prospect of conscription, became quite rowdy but they also persuaded the crew of the Saxonia that they should refuse to sail with a shipload of shirkers and the emigrants were left ashore. Only six volunteered for military service the rest preferring to return to Ireland. 155 The significance of the incident consists in marking the virtual end of emigration in wartime and in that it provoked Dr. O'Dwyer, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Limerick, to write one of the letters which earned him a hero's niche in the pantheon of Irish republicanism. The letter was influential, it was the first direct direct attack on Redmond from a bishop and it released many people's inhibitions about criticizing the Irish Party. Dr. O'Dwyer's letter was in fact more sharply critical of Mr. Redmond than it was of England. He did say that "the treatment which the poor Irish emigrant lads have received at Liverpool is enough to make any Irishman's blood boil with

154 E. Strauss, Irish Nationalism and British Democracy, op. cit., p. 259.

anger and indignation". But in another paragraph the Bishop went on:

But in all the shame and humiliation of this disgraceful episode what angers one most is that there is no one, not even one of their own countrymen, to stand up and defend them. Their crime is that they are not ready to die for England. Why should they? What have they or their forebears ever got from England that they should die for her? Mr. Redmond will say a Home Rule Act on the Statute Book. But any intelligent Irishman will say a simulacrum of Home Rule, with an express notice that it is never to come into operation.

The war may be just or unjust, but any fair-minded man will admit that it is England's war, not Ireland's. When it is over, if England wins, she will hold a dominant power in this world, and her manufactures and commerce will increase by leaps and bounds. Win or lose, Ireland will go on, in our old round of misgovernment, intensified by a grinding poverty which will make life intolerable. Yet the poor fellows who do not see the advantages of dying for such a cause are to be insulted as "shirkers" and "cowards", and the men whom they have raised to power and influence have not one word to say on their behalf. 156

The letter was a blow to the Irish Parliamentary Party. One of Redmond's major accomplishments when reconstructing the Party following the bleak years of the Parnell split had been to win the support of most members of the Roman Catholic hierarchy and secure the neutrality of those whom he did not win. Now a crack had appeared in that support and it was not because the Party proved too extreme but quite the opposite, because of the implied charge that it had become too closely identified with England. Many of the younger clergy who, more than the bishops, tended to share their flocks'

156Cork Examiner, 11 November, 1915.
apprehensions about conscription and their general scepticism about the war were encouraged by this open support for their attitude coming from a respected member of the hierarchy.

The fact that the day following the publication of Dr. O'Dwyer's letter a warning was issued that young men must enlist by the 30th November or compulsion would be used merely reinforced the impact of the letter and disarmed in advance any critics of his attitude. 157 The meekness and mildness of the Bishop's critics was an indication of the weakening of the Irish Parliamentary Party's hold on Irish public opinion. Only Michael Moloney, a solicitor, tried to make a reasoned case against the Bishop's arguments and he took his stand on the proposition that Ireland was an integral part of the United Kingdom and that Dr. O'Dwyer could not logically choose to be part of that Kingdom when money for land purchase was forthcoming and not to be when political obligations ran the other way. This position may have had the virtue of logic but, with the Irish Party tenaciously clinging to its sole victory of getting the Union modified, at least on paper, this kind of argument was only likely to appeal to unionists. 158 The Irish Party could make no effective reply to the Bishop's letter and continued to suffer an erosion of traditional support. This was made clear by the Killmallock Guardians' unanimous vote expressing approval of the Bishop of Limerick's


158 *Cork Examiner*, 20 November, 1915.
The enforced retention in Ireland of men desirous of migrating and prevented from doing so by England, the country they blamed for the conditions which led them to want to emigrate in the first place, had a long term effect on Anglo-Irish relations. Edgar Holt pointed out that:

The stoppage of emigration left Ireland with far more young men of military age than she had for many years. This had a twofold effect on the Irish situation. It increased the ranks of potential fighters against British rule and Lord French, indeed, was to say as Viceroy in 1920 that all the Irish disorders were the result of "having 100,000 surplus young men". At the same time it made the Irish even more anxious about the possible introduction of conscription for the British Army. The threat of conscription was soon to be one of the major factors working against all hope of a settlement in Ireland.

Few of these young men were immediately drawn into the Irish Volunteers. Most of them having resolved to leave Ireland were simply not politically active or interested but the enforced stay in Ireland, the inexorably growing threat of conscription and eventually the aftermath of the Easter Rising of 1916 would draw them back into the political life of Ireland, inevitably on the anti-British side. There were a few who joined the Irish Volunteers in 1915 and contributed to the first significant increase in the membership of that body since the split. This increase, as Robert Kee pointed out:

... was due to a combination of practical and political factors. Among these were: the growing awareness that Redmond's own Volunteers were becoming ineffective as they were drained off to the

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159 Ibid.
war; the simultaneous feeling that the prospect of Home Rule, like the prospect of an end to the war itself, was receding into obscure mists of time in which a British Government might find it easier not to keep faith; the retention of a higher proportion of young farmers' sons on Irish soil than usual, owing to the halt in normal emigration; and the growing Irish determination that the threatened Conscription Act should never be applied to Ireland.161

Lord Wimborne was at this time calling upon Irish employers for further help in recruiting and he was getting a good response.162 The Irish Volunteers and the Irish extremists were becoming ever more incensed at the continuing support for recruiting and for such recruiting tactics by the Irish Party and they took charge of organizing the Manchester Martyrs' Commemoration activities for that year. They used the occasion to preach openly for a return to Fenianism. The point has been made that:

The fact that the reprieved companion in arms of the 'noblehearted three', Edward O'Meagher Condon, the man who had in fact first shouted the immortal "God Save Ireland" from the dock, was still alive, and had been staunch supporter of Redmond for many years and an optimistic enthusiast for the Home Rule Act, troubled Pearse and his colleagues no more than had the United Irish League affiliations of O'Donovan Rossa. They were working quite consciously with historical myth in a climate that was becoming subtly favourable to it.163

Sean MacDermott, speaking at the Cork Manchester Martyrs' demonstrations said that:

He believed it would be dishonest to take part in a Manchester Martyrs' demonstration without feeling the principles of the martyrs, and being prepared to sacrifice life for those principles

161 The Green Flag, op. cit., p. 552.
if necessary. He also believed that it would not be alone dishonest but national blasphemy to treat it from any other point but from the viewpoint of fenianism.\textsuperscript{164}

The Irish Party was increasingly finding itself forced out of activities which a few years before it had dominated and it was profoundly humiliating to be told by political upstarts that they had no right to participate in such affairs. Earlier in November when Irish Week had been inaugurated at a Mansion House meeting presided over by Eoin MacNeill which Patrick Pearse and James Connolly had addressed, Alderman Byrne, an Irish Party Member of Parliament who rose to support resolutions proposed by Pearse was prevented from speaking by hostile interruptions.\textsuperscript{165} The meeting was obviously dominated by persons hostile to the Party but they were dominating more and more meetings as Party supporters either went to war or stayed home.

The intensified Irish Volunteer activity in the latter part of 1915 led Lord Midleton, the Southern Unionist leader, to urge as strongly as he could that they should be disarmed and forbidden to parade. The Chief Secretary refused to follow Lord Midleton's advice, maintaining that the Sinn Fein organization and the Irish Volunteer drilling did not warrant taking alarm. He was also confronted, of course, with the difficulty of Liberal ministers, who were still a majority in the Cabinet, of acting against one force of Volunteers but not against the others. The dilemma of Augustine Birrell and

\textsuperscript{164}Cork Examiner, 29 November, 1915.
\textsuperscript{165}Freeman's Journal, 2 November, 1915.
to a lesser extent, of the Prime Minister and his other Liberal colleagues has been aptly described in the following terms:

It seems useless asking whether any good could possibly have come from the British Government taking action against the Irish Volunteers at some early stage in the movement's development before everything was out of control. The leaders of the Volunteers might have been detained for the duration of the war, perhaps deported to England, and their followers disarmed. But any repressive action of the sort by a government that had stubbornly pushed the Home Rule Bill through Parliament would have been seen as a betrayal of their pledges so long as equally vigorous measures were not taken against the Ulster Volunteers, which would, of course, have been quite impracticable as most of them were in France fighting and dying for their country. There was a war on.166

Redmond would have been destroyed by any such discriminatory suppression and he too counselled against it but the Irish Volunteers were having an effect on political attitudes which was slowly undermining his position. One example of the effect of Irish Volunteer activity which was not unique was contained in a police report from the East Riding of Galway County which related that:

During the latter part of the year there were some signs of improvement in the Athenry district, where a very large proportion of the people disapproved of the policy of the Sinn Fein Party; but they were afraid to show their disapproval, having no confidence in either the will or the power of the Government to protect them. On the 14 November, the Irish (Sinn Fein) Volunteers held a meeting in an enclosed field at Athenry at which about 670 persons attended from various parts of the Riding. Of these 160 were armed with either rifles or shotguns. A number of R.C. clergymen took part in the proceedings and three of them delivered inflammatory

speeches. At the conclusion of the meeting from which the police were excluded, shots were fired in the field where the meeting was held, at the railway station, and along the roads. The meeting had a very bad effect at Athenry, where a feeling of resentment against the Sinn Feiners had been growing amongst the more respectable inhabitants and public opinion was beginning to assert itself on the side of law and order. The effect of this meeting was to check this change for the better on the part of the people, who became afraid and were completely overawed by this display of armed and unlawful force which they believed the Government were too weak to resist. Moreover, the presence of so many of the clergy at the meeting was looked upon as a victory for the Sinn Feiners, and was a matter of great surprise to the well-disposed.  

Allowing for a measure of exaggeration due to the frustration of a policeman prevented from doing what he conceives of as his duty there can be no doubt that the kind of event described in this report was taking place all over Southern Ireland in late 1915 and that it was not without some impact on the public. The Royal Irish Constabulary and the Dublin Metropolitan Police became increasingly limited in their duties to observing the Irish Volunteers, and noting the names of the leaders following parades, marches through the streets, mock attacks and manoeuvres. Demoralization which was already high because of low pay increased and they tended to become objects of contempt while the Irish Volunteers won a measure of popular admiration for defying the Government, an increasingly conscriptionist Government. There were moves in local government bodies to protest at taxes being collected for the

167 Brendan MacGiolla Choille, ed., Intelligence Notes 1913-16, op. cit., p. 151.
provision of police services. In the course of one such protest at a Kingstown Urban Council Meeting Mr. James Kennedy attacked Sir Mathew Nathan, identified him with Shylock and complained that Ireland had now been placed under Jewish rule.\textsuperscript{168}

Meanwhile John Redmond was recruiting for the British Army. The recruiting platform had by late 1915 become virtually the only platform upon which Irish Parliamentary Party leaders appeared. At Waterford Redmond gave a fairly typical recruiting performance where he presented the arguments which were used to justify enlistment. He argued that:

\begin{quote}
People talk of this war as if it was the war of England only. It is not the war of England only. It is the war of the Empire, to begin with. And what is the Empire? England is not the Empire. The Empire is Australia, is Canada, is New Zealand, is South Africa - all self-governing nations, largely made up of men of Irish blood and Irish descent. It is not the cause even of the Empire only. It is the cause in a very special way of Ireland. It is the cause of the freedom of small nationalities in every part of the World.

Is Ireland to stand by, apathetic and careless, when Belgium is devastated, when untold outrages are committed on the religious of Belgium of both sexes, when the whole country is made a desert, and the forces of religion destroyed, when Alsace and Lorraine are claiming their ancient nationality and their ancient freedom? This is a cause; not the war of England, but a cause of right and justice and liberty.\textsuperscript{169}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{168}Freeman's Journal, 3 December, 1915. Sir Mathew Nathan a few months before had made a public declaration of his faith at ceremonies honouring Corporal Issy Smith of Dublin who had won the Victoria Cross. See Freeman's Journal, 17 September, 1915.

\textsuperscript{169}Freeman's Journal, 3 December, 1915.
Lord Wimborne who was also on the platform at the Waterford meeting admitted that some "unintentional obstacles" had been placed in the way of Irish recruiting by the War Office. But there was very little evidence that there would be any intentional removal of these obstacles by Lord Kitchener. Recruiting fervour was not encouraged by the continuing discrimination practiced against Ireland not only by the War Office but also by the Ministry of Munitions and in December the Cork Examiner again complained of this, commenting - "What a pity Ireland is not better equipped for the output of munitions! English and Scottish manufacturers are literally coining out of the production of war materials, and the colonies, as they are entitled to, are also reaping a rich harvest".

The extremists' campaign against recruiting, virtually unhampered by the police, was becoming better organized and in mid-December they held a large all-Ireland meeting in Dublin's Mansion House which was as usual an anti-recruiting meeting though described as being anti-conscription. The meeting was chaired by Eoin MacNeill and with him on the platform were Father Sheehy, who is thought to have been an active member of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, Mrs. Sheehy - Skeffington, Thomas Farren, President of the Dublin...
Trades Council, Patrick Pearse, James Connolly, Bulmer Hobson and Arthur Griffith. To add to the growing strength of these anti-Redmondites there was reproduced at the same time in Irish newspapers an attack on English Catholics and a "defence" of Redmond by Dr. O'Dwyer. This was an article reproduced from the "American Ecclesiastical Review". After complaining that the "Tablet" had disagreed with his appeal to Redmond to use his influence on the Government for the purpose of securing a truce in the war in conformity with the Pope's wishes, Dr. O'Dwyer went on:

What is the explanation of this miserable attitude? In their hearts, I dare say, the "Tablet" people think themselves, true and loyal Catholics, and as against the sects of Irish Protestants the description would be correct enough. But when it comes to a war in which England is engaged it seems to be "My country, right or wrong", and pretty much the same deference for the Pope from Catholics as from others. There is something of the same spirit in Mr. Redmond's refusal to interfere. He will not touch the Pope, or his letter; he does not even condescend to mention them. He is a Catholic and an Irishman. In his very blood there must be something that would warm to Rome and the successor of the Fisherman; yet he cannot find one word of courtesy or deference for the Head of the Church, but puts aside his solemn and fatherly appeal, made in the name of Christ Our Lord, as if it were a resolution by some prettyfogging political clique. It is painful and somewhat humiliating, but we all know that in his inner mind Mr. Redmond thinks and feels differently from the 'Tablet' men. They are English, their blood is up...But Mr. Redmond, at the back of his mind, cares, I dare say, just as much as the average Irishman for Anglo-Saxon domination; but the exigencies of politics compel him to simulate feelings that he cannot possibly entertain.


For those who were disappointed by the lacklustre performance of the Irish Parliamentary Party, Patrick Pearse offered a more heroic alternative in one of his most frenetic articles which was quickly followed by a more mystical one which continued Pearse's endeavour to Christianize nationalism. "Peace and the Gael", the first article to be published in December 1915, was written in an exalted mood and provides evidence of what would now be described as strong sadomasochistic tendencies in Pearse. Pearse was a complex personality and like all revolutionaries, and perhaps more than most, was a little mad according to the standards of the society against which he rebelled. Had the British Government reacted as most governments did at this time, had the advice of Lord Midleton and of the police and military been heeded; the Irish hero of the early twentieth century might well have been the more calculating and more rational Bulmer Hobson who was preparing the Irish Volunteers for a defensive guerilla war when British repression came. But the British Government by not behaving as expected, by giving its enemies a free hand to drill, arm and propagandize, also gave Patrick Pearse his opportunity for heroic martyrdom on the altar of Irish Nationalism.

In almost any other country at this time under wartime conditions Sean MacDermott, Patrick Pearse, even Eoin MacNeill and many others would have been detained and men like Hobson, whose name was seldom linked with anti-recruiting demonstrations
or with the publication of seditious articles would then have carried on an Anglo-Irish war. But the visionaries were given a clear field. In "Peace and the Gael" Pearse declared that:

The last sixteen months have been the most glorious in the history of Europe. Heroism has come back to the earth. On whichever side the men who rule the people have marshalled them, whether with England to uphold her tyranny, or with Germany to break through that tyranny, the people themselves have gone into battle because to each the old voice that speaks out of the soil of a nation has spoken anew. Each fights for the fatherland. It is policy that moves the governments; it is patriotism that stirs the peoples. Belgium defending her soil is heroic, and so is Turkey fighting with her back to Constantinople. It is good for the world that such things should be done. The old heart of the earth needed to be warmed with the red wine of the battlefields. Such august homage was never before offered to God as this, the homage of millions of lives gladly given for love of country.175

He then went on to declare that if the war led to a social revolution in England, brought the French back to Christianity or freed Poland or Ireland, it would have been worth all these lives. The Irish needed war, they feared it only because they did not know its exhilaration. "When war comes to Ireland", he wrote, "she must welcome it as she would the Angel of God".176 He identified nationalism with Christianity and declared that:

Ireland will not find Christ's peace until she has taken Christ's sword. What peace she has known in these latter days has been the devil's peace, peace with sin, peace with dishonour. It is a foul thing dear only to men of foul breeds. Christ's peace is lovely in its coming, beautiful are its feet on the

175 Political Writings and Speeches, op. cit., p. 216.
176 Ibid., p. 217.
mountains. But, it is heralded by terrific messengers; seraphim and cherubim blow trumpets of war before it. We must not flinch when we are passing through that uproar; we must not faint at the sight of blood. Winning through it, we (or those of us who survive) shall come into great joy. We and our fathers have known Pax Britannica. To our sons we must bequeath the Peace of the Gael.\textsuperscript{177}

The glorification of war in this article offended James Connolly whose conception of war was more down-to-earth than Pearse's and he was led to comment that anyone who thought what Pearse had said about war was "a blithering idiot".\textsuperscript{178} Connolly, however, was no less determined than Pearse to strike a blow at England during the current war and he was enabled by his enthusiasm to perceive Wilhelm II as the "peace-loving German Emperor".\textsuperscript{179} Unable to persuade organized labour to support his position he was driven to ally himself with the extreme nationalists on the basis of agreement on means alone and he diverged from those who shared his ends but rejected the means of the extremists, men like Francis Sheehy-Skeffington, Sean O'Casey, Jim Larkin, then in the United States, as well as many other English as well as Irish labour leaders and socialists.

In his other article of late 1915, "Ghosts", Patrick Pearse attacked his own generation, and by implication the Irish Parliamentary Party, for failing to rebel, for not recognizing "in the people the image and likeness of God".\textsuperscript{180}

\textsuperscript{177} Ibid., p. 217.

\textsuperscript{178} See Edgar Holt, \textit{Protest in Arms}, op. cit., p. 82.

\textsuperscript{179} Workers' Republic, 6 November, 1914.

\textsuperscript{180} Political Writings and Speeches, op. cit., p. 224.
But most clearly indicative of the gulf which separated Connolly as a social revolutionary making use of nationalism as a stage and a weapon in the fight against capitalist imperialism and the Irish extreme nationalists was the passage where Pearse wrote:

I make the contention that the national demand of Ireland is fixed and determined; that that demand has been made by every generation; that we of this generation receive it as a trust from our fathers; that we are bound by it; that we have not the right to alter it or to abate it by one jot or tittle; and that any undertaking made in the name of Ireland to accept in full satisfaction of Ireland's claim anything less than the generations of Ireland have stood for is null and void, binding on Ireland neither by the law of God nor by the law of nations. 181

Reading this one can understand Pearse's dislike for the legal profession which led him to abandon it. The statement is profoundly reactionary. Even Edmund Burke had made the living equal partners with the dead and not rigidly bound to their decisions. It is difficult to believe that Connolly could ever have accepted such bondage to the dead hand of the past. It is frequently asserted that Pearse was largely converted to Connolly's social vision of an Ireland owned in common by all the people of Ireland but it is significant that he arrived at this not on the basis of its being socially desirable for the future but because he could refer to a concept of common ownership in the mythical past of Ireland.

The National Volunteers had almost vanished from the scene at year end. On Sunday, 20 December, a National Volunteer

181 Ibid., p. 230.
demonstration in Limerick was reported and while they were noticeably better received than the Irish Volunteers earlier in the year what makes the demonstration worthy of mention is that such demonstrations, almost daily occurrences in January, were now exceptional events in December.\textsuperscript{182} Redmond, Dillon and the rest of the Irish Party leadership ended the year desperately fighting against the threat of conscription. In December the Prime Minister issued a call for one million men and the Irish Parliamentary Party sensing danger passed a resolution declaring that conscription was unnecessary and that voluntary recruiting was producing and would continue to produce "all the men necessary to carry the war to a victorious issue. We repeat, accordingly, our resolve to resist by every means in our power any attempt to bring into force a system of compulsory military service".\textsuperscript{183} But on the 30th December Conscription for single men was announced by the Cabinet though it was not clear whether the scheme would apply to Ireland. The year, in any case, ended on an anxious note for southern Ireland. In Ulster the decision to evacuate Suvla Bay was taken as a vindication of Sir Edward Carson's resignation from the Cabinet and the prospect of conscription was welcomed. As Clifford King pointed out "It would be true to say that the patriotic majority in Northern Ireland would have welcomed conscription. Their patriotism is not in question; but it is also likely that, in some cases, there

\textsuperscript{182}Freeman's Journal, 21 December, 1915.

\textsuperscript{183}Ibid., 22 December, 1915.
could have been a certain vindictiveness in their attitude.\textsuperscript{184}

It has been written of the year 1915 that "the confidence which the bulk of the Irish people had in the Parliamentary Party was steadily eroded during 1915 by the incredibly stupid policy for Ireland pursued by Lord Kitchener, the Secretary of State for War".\textsuperscript{185} But while, this was a large factor there were others which have been referred to here. The lack of contracts for war materials meant that the workers in Irish industry were less able to face the rapidly rising cost of living during the year than workers elsewhere in the United Kingdom. The employers were also increasingly resentful of the discrimination being practiced against them. It is true that they were thus better able to release employees for the armed forces but that only raised the level of tension. Conscription as a constant threat contributed to discontent and was exploited by extremists to raise tensions even further. The arrest and deportation of a few of the paid Irish Volunteer organizers was resented as being coercive and yet the coercion was so mild that it did not interfere with parades, drills, exercises and mock attacks. This kind of coercion produces only resentment without tackling or suppressing the fundamental impulses which provoked coercion in the first instance. The Government's policy left the extremists frustrated but free to pursue their goals and to propagandize their point of view,

\textsuperscript{184} The Orange and the Green, op. cit., p. 53.
it did little or nothing to help the Irish Party maintain its prestige at home and it ignored it at Westminster, it left the police dispirited, helpless and an object of ridicule rather than of fear or respect. In the country there was a large increase of "farmers' sons", unemployed or under-employed, dissatisfied, alienated and feeling threatened by conscription. The farmers themselves had at first done well out of the war but by the end of 1915 agricultural prices were being overtaken and only the increase in the price of cattle and barley exceeded the rise in the general wholesale index. The price of hay and wheat was just then being overtaken and the price of pork, eggs, butter, oats and potatoes had fallen far behind.\(^{186}\) The industrial boom, slower to gather impetus, was outstripping the initial agricultural boom and with two-thirds of southern Irishmen being rural dwellers as compared with one-tenth of Englishmen the economic disparity between the two areas increased. The Protestants of Ulster being urban dwellers in a much higher proportion than their Roman Catholic neighbours did not experience the same downward trend in their relative economic status. Shipbuilding and the linen industry, both centred on Belfast, and their ancillary industries prospered and the Ulster Protestants were not emotionally exposed to the same ambivalence which affected other Irishmen. Dr. O'Dwyer and a number of the lower

clergy began to undermine the support which Redmond had long enjoyed from the hierarchy and clergy of the Roman Catholic Church. In 1915 fifty-two members of the clergy came under police notice for disloyal language or conduct. This was only a small number of the total clergy and in most cases the reported instances were trivial but it indicates that Redmond was not enjoying the active church support which he once had. The behaviour of the clergy paralleled that of the people in that only a very small number deserted Redmond in order to embrace separatism or extremism but large numbers either withdrew their support or became passive rather than active supporters.

In a study of Sir Mathew Nathan it has been pointed out that by the end of the year Nathan considered that the Irish Party had lost control of the country while the extremists were organizing and gaining strength. The question of what to do about the extremists was one which daily confronted Nathan and it has been pointed out that for him the answer to that question involved a choice between two evils:

Either he must let the extremists have their heads, trust the police reports that they had no large following, and gamble that war-time prosperity would cancel out their propaganda. Or else he must clamp down on them and risk a major explosion which might actually finish by strengthening them and further weakening the orthodox Home Rulers.

But as in Ireland there was no wartime prosperity to speak of at least among those who were likely to heed extremist propaganda, Nathan was severely handicapped from the start if he chose the first alternative which was also the most congenial to Augustine Birrell. In the end it was the policy which they chose. It had the attraction that it continued the policy first adopted in relation to the Ulster Volunteers, extended to the original Irish National Volunteers and now, under wartime conditions, to the new Irish Volunteers who were manifesting themselves as potentially more violent than the others. The initial decisions taken in 1913 were imposing themselves still. As Lucian Pye has observed "the initial decisions of a government confronted with a threat of internal war are usually the most fateful and long-lasting of any it will be called to make throughout an insurrection" and so it was for Anglo-Irish relations.

1915 was for southern Irishmen a year of disillusionment and disillusionment has been described as

... a slow, surreptitious type of change. It begins with undercover reservations to the effort of remaining loyal. It represents a cumulative record of the costs of adaptation. Whether it dies in its suppressed state or becomes publicized in awareness depends on the number and import of disillusioning experiences that are encountered.191

For the Irish Parliamentary Party the process would culminate

190 "The Roots of Insurgency and the Commencement of Rebellions" in Harry Eckstein, Internal War, op. cit., p. 167.
in 1918 but in 1915 it lost its charismatic appeal for the Irish people. Had the war ended and Home Rule been implemented the Party might have recovered but under existing wartime conditions its statements concerning Home Rule were increasingly perceived as meaningless. Its ability to stop the push for conscription was questioned. Its loss of influence on the Government in the face of coalition was palpable. Its recruiting exertions were viewed with suspicion and as casting a doubt about its past professions. It proved unable to influence the War Office or the Ministry of Munitions. In other words it had lost the ability to perform most of the functions expected of it by Ireland and during the war it succumbed to the promptings of conscience, principle and socialization and backed the British war effort despite the rebuffs to which it was subjected. From the point of view of moral rectitude, courage and devotion to commitments this may have been admirable; from the point of view of Irish politics it proved to be suicidal.
The events of the year 1916 in Ireland and even the events of the subsequent years are overshadowed by the uprising in Dublin which took place on Easter Monday. It is difficult now to examine Irish political life during these years without being influenced by the realization that within a few short years that particular rising would occupy the preeminent place in the hagiology of Irish nationalism. It would in any case have been the major event of the year 1916 but it was not immediately realized that it would ultimately be perceived as the major incident of Irish history since the battle of Clontarf. As such it has exerted a powerful fascination upon students of the period which must be resisted in order to capture the nature of public opinion in 1916.

The year began with a conscription crisis. It seemed clear that Britain was about to institute compulsory military service but it was not yet clear whether Ireland would be included in the measure. In Ireland the Cork Examiner maintained that conscription would not be imposed in Great Britain because of the opposition of the trade union movement. The Independent newspapers, on the other hand, foresaw conscription as inevitable but thought it likely that Ireland would be

\(^{1}\) January, 1916.
excluded from its provisions.\(^2\) What immediately became very clear was that the issue of conscription was going to be profoundly divisive in Ireland. The recently improved relations between unionists and nationalists over the prosecution of the war would be subjected to severe strain. The Executive Committee of the Irish Unionist Alliance approved a resolution:

That this committee, representing the Unionist opinion of the Southern provinces, desires to place on record its opinion that in the event of a measure of national service being introduced by the Government, it would be a national disgrace if Ireland were excluded or any differentiation made in regard to this country.\(^3\)

The Church of Ireland Archbishop of Armagh endorsed such an attitude issuing an appeal to all Irishmen to support the war effort. The Archbishop declared that:

To exclude Ireland because some prefer that our volunteers should bear all the suffering for them would be indeed an eternal disgrace to our country, and would be disastrous to our Irish regiments. In the course of time even regiments like the Connaughts and the Munsters would be Irish in name only.\(^4\)

The Irish Parliamentary Party position on conscription was no less clear and John Dillon represented it as rejecting the case for conscription in Britain let alone Ireland. Even if a case could be made for it in Great Britain, Ireland would simply have no part of it.\(^5\) A number of local government bodies endorsed this position, the Kerry County Council resolving

\(^2\) See for example Irish Weekly Independent, 1 January, 1916.
\(^3\) Cork Examiner, 1 January, 1916.
\(^4\) Ibid., 5 January, 1916.
\(^5\) Ibid., 4 January, 1916.
to resist conscription to the "last breath". The Bill, when introduced, provided for compulsory military service of unmarried men between the ages of eighteen and forty but it did exclude Ireland from its provisions. Sir Edward Carson and the other Irish Unionist members of parliament predictably protested at the exclusion of Ireland from the measure's provisions and they issued a joint statement:

That we regard the reported action of H.M. Government in deliberately and of its own motion proposing to leave Ireland out of the scheme for compulsory service as an insult and humiliation to the loyal and patriotic population of the country, and an abandonment of the principle of equality of sacrifice in time of war on the part of H.M. subjects in the United Kingdom.7

The decision to exclude Ireland from the operation of the Compulsory Military service Bill was eventually defended by Mr. Bonar Law himself who explained to the House of Commons that Ireland was too deeply divided over this question to make enforcement a practical alternative to exclusion.8

The division of Irish opinion over conscription contributed significantly to the resurgence of mutual hostility between nationalists and unionists in Ireland but there were other side effects of the war which were proving to be irritants in early 1916. As an economy measure the Government found it advisable to curtail certain grants affecting Ireland. Grants for education were involved and the Irish reaction was swift. Dublin Corporation passed a protest resolution against this

8Ibid., 18 January, 1916.
retrenchment and the Gaelic League organized a protest meeting at the Mansion House where the growing alienation of Gaelic Leaguers from the Irish Parliamentary Party was made evident by the hostile reception accorded to a former Lord Mayor of Dublin, Lorcan Sherlock, who was greeted with boos. The Standing Committee of Irish Bishops added its voice to the chorus of protest together with a strong suggestion that the reduction of grants for education represented a deliberate policy of discrimination against Ireland by the British Government. The Nationalist press joined in the protest and the Cork Examiner in particular criticized the British Treasury in strong language referring to the "insatiable and ingrained injustice of the permanent staff". These protests were effective and the grants for education were restored before the end of the month. The general reduction in Irish grants, however, was not reversed despite the protests of bodies such as the Dublin Chamber of Commerce which took strong exception to curtailment of Irish grants in cases where corresponding grants in Great Britain were not being cut. One significant feature of the agitation for the restoration of education grants was the lack of involvement

by the Irish Parliamentary Party. The Party was at this time heavily involved in defending its position on conscription but the experience demonstrated that it was possible to win political victories through agitation at home, a long standing Sinn Fein proposition.

The Irish Party not only lost face through its lack of involvement in the education grants struggle but John Dillon, speaking on the Military Service Bill in the House of Commons, further undermined the Party's popularity. He declared his opposition to conscription in principle but he also declared that if there was to be conscription he would oppose the exclusion of clergymen, arguing that a class apart ought not to be set up in a democracy through deliberate government action. John Dillon had always been viewed as anti-clerical by the Irish hierarchy but this intervention during a war in which Irish bishops had thundered against the wickedness of the godless French who made priests fight was not calculated to improve relations between the Irish Roman Catholic clergy and the Irish Party. These relations would continue to cool particularly between the old leaders and the younger clergy who shared the frustrations of those who resented the fact that the Irish Party seemed to have nothing to say to them other than urge enlistment.

The recruiting figures published by Lord Wimborne in early February revealed that Ireland was responding rather well to John Redmond's recruiting appeals, though Ulster unionists

were quick to point out that substantially more than half -
49,760 out of 86,277 of the volunteers for the British
forces since the outbreak of war came from Ulster, 29,228
of them from the Belfast area alone.16 John Redmond, in an
effort to spur Southern Ireland to greater efforts, issued
a manifesto shortly after the publication of the Lord
Lieutenant's recruiting report. By 1916 it was difficult
to get more voluntary recruits from the United Kingdom as
a whole; this had been part of the motivation behind the in-
troduction of the Military Service Bill in Britain, and
Redmond pulled all stops in an emotional appeal which did
as much to discredit him among Sinn Fein sympathizers as it
did for recruiting. Having claimed that Ireland had finally
won "The concession of liberty" through the Home Rule Act, a
claim which the regularly prolonged suspension of the Act
rendered moot in the opinion of many, Redmond went on to
speak of the Irish army and declared:

I called for a **distinctively Irish army composed**
of Irishmen, **led by Irishmen, and trained for the**
**field at home in Ireland.**

I acknowledge, with profound gratitude, the mag-
nificent response the country has made.

For the first time in history we have today a
huge Irish army in the **field**. Its achievements
have covered Ireland with glory before the world,
and have thrilled our hearts with pride.

**North and South have vied with each other in**
**springing to arms, and, please God, the sacrifices**
they have made side by side on the field of battle
**will form the surest bond of a united Irish nation**
in the future.

We have kept our word. We have fulfilled our trust. We have definitely accepted the position, and undertaken the obligations of a self-governed unit amongst the nations which make up the Empire.

One more duty remains to be fulfilled. We have to stand by and maintain the Irish army at the front.

We must not, and will not, tolerate the idea of our Irish regiments being reinforced by any but Irish soldiers. Ireland must maintain the Irish regiments until victory has been won. The gaps in the ranks of our Irish army must be filled, not by Englishmen or Scotchmen or Welshmen, but by Irishmen.

Our gallant fellow countrymen at the front commissioned me to make this appeal.

They appeal to-day through me from the trenches, to the farmers, the labourers, the artisans and to every class of our people not to desert them.

In your name I promised them in France and Flanders that Ireland would stand by them.

Will you fulfil that promise?

The task is not difficult. Fill up the reserve battalions. Your brothers in the trenches are not only upholding the honour of Ireland before the world, they are defending Ireland itself from ruin and destruction, from murder and sacrilege, from the confiscation of the lands of the Irish farmer, and the wrecking of the property and prosperity of every class of our population.

You are under no compulsion save that of duty.

In the name of honour, justice, and religion, in the name of common gratitude, and in their own highest self-interest, I appeal to the young men of Ireland who are still available to join the Reserve Battalions and to commence their training so that, in the event of the war not speedily ending they may be ready to fill every gap in the ranks of "The Irish army at the front".  

This appeal, sincere as it was for Redmond, contrasted oddly in its proprietary emphasis on the Irish army with the complaints

only a month before about the difficulties of Irish Parliamentary Party members attempting to obtain commissions in the army. The latest complaints of discrimination against Irish M.P.'s had been voiced on the occasion of the recent promotion of Mr. Lees-Smith, M.P. to the rank of lance-corporal.  

Feelings of discrimination or of relative deprivation were thus engendered by the actions of the War Office as well as by the retrenchment of grants from the British Treasury for education and for other purposes overseen by the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction. These actions were perceived as conflicting with the Government's explicit war aim of preserving and strengthening small nations. Added to the threat of conscription momentarily averted this created considerable uneasiness in Ireland and the fact that John Redmond's major concern while all this was going on seemed to be recruiting and recruiting alone caused a certain amount of dissention within Irish Party ranks. An early manifestation of this was a minor revolt against the nominating convention system of the Irish Party in North Louth with the result that two candidates both claiming to be Nationalists contested the seat. Joe Devlin was brought in to campaign for the official Party candidate and his intervention proved decisive though the unofficial


candidate came within five hundred votes of Mr. Whitty, the officially endorsed candidate.\footnote{Ibid., 21 and 26 February, 1916.}

Another manifestation of the general malaise in Ireland involved trials in cases of anti-recruiting or other anti-government activities. Alexander M'Cabe, a former Sligo schoolmaster, arrested at the Sligo railway station with gelignite and a detonator in his possession was found not guilty by a jury which was applauded by the spectators.\footnote{Irish Weekly Independent, 12 February, 1916.} Terrence McSwiney of Cork, who would later achieve fame as an Irish martyr, was fined only one shilling for making very strongly worded anti-recruiting speeches.\footnote{Cork Examiner, 22 February, 1916.} Thomas Kent, another future martyr from Cork, was charged with possession of a weapon near a railway station. The charge was dismissed by the Cork magistrates one of whom, Jeremiah Lane spoke of the "accursed Empire" being the source of starvation in Ireland.\footnote{Irish Weekly Independent, 4 March, 1916.} Mr. Lane was later dismissed from his post as a Justice of the Peace, a post he had occupied for eight years.\footnote{Cork Examiner, 18 March, 1916.}

The feelings of frustration in Ireland were exacerbated early in 1916 by the further postponement of Home Rule for yet another six months,\footnote{Irish Weekly Independent, 4 March, 1916.} and by the announcement that no further loans would be made by the Board of Works. This affected the building of piers in Ireland as well as many schemes for land
improvement and struck at the farming and fishing communities of Connaught in particular. The Freeman's Journal protested that many projects involving the improvement of public health would have to be abandoned. English malevolence was as usual perceived as the main source of these actions but it must be born in mind that England at that moment was horror struck at the first Zeppelin raids and was endeavouring to husband resources to cope with the depradations of this new form of warfare.

Irish labour was further antagonized at this time by the Cork Corporation's attempt to have Ireland withdrawn from the provisions of the Insurance Act. Cork Corporation was made up of supporters of either John Redmond's Irish Parliamentary Party or William O'Brien's All-for-Ireland League and this action inevitably increased labour's alienation from the two old middle-class parties and drove labour forces further into the political limbo from which they were not to emerge for many years.

Industrially Ireland was clearly not benefitting as much as the rest of the United Kingdom from the boom in the production of war material. Dublin had been given only one small factory which produced eighteen-pounder shells and this came nowhere near to compensating for the disruption caused by the scarcity of raw materials for the peace time industries. It has been pointed out that:

26 March, 1916.

At this time so strong was the feeling which existed in Ireland in this connexion - (firms here were prevented from carrying on their regular trades owing to the impossibility of procuring raw materials, etc., unless they were engaged on war contracts; thousands of skilled and unskilled Irish work people, male and female, were recruited by the Labour Exchanges for munitions work in Great Britain, and, consequently had to contribute to the expenses of the upkeep of two houses, one in this country and another in England) - that a body, thoroughly representative of more than three-fourths of Ireland, was established under the title of the All-Ireland Munitions and Government Supplies Committee, with headquarters in Dublin.28

This Committee obtained promises from the Government to establish a few more munitions factories in Ireland and to increase the orders being placed with existing Irish firms but the realization of benefit from these promises was slow in coming and unemployment continued at a comparatively high rate.29

Labour on the whole remained unimpressed by Sinn Fein as an alternative to the older Nationalism despite the unfavourable situation in which it found itself. James Connolly, the acting General Secretary of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, did draw very much closer to the separatists and in January, 1916 he had in fact joined the secret military council planning an insurrection but he failed to carry with him not only the labour movement but even his own union. The Irish Citizen Army even had to resort to open intimidation with rifles and bayonets to prevent a general

29 Ibid., p. 207.
meeting of the union from dismissing Connolly from his post and barring him from Liberty Hall. Labour in general in early 1916 found itself without a political allegiance. It was increasingly alienated from existing Irish politics and society, available to join an ongoing revolution but not in a revolutionary frame of mind.

The forces of extreme nationalism staged a major show of strength in Dublin on St. Patrick's Day. In Cork both Volunteer organizations were reported as collaborating on the celebrations thus reducing the separatist tenor of the MacNeill forces. In Dublin, however, no such collaboration took place and the Irish Volunteers dominated the scene. The display was such that when the Irish Times published its Sinn Fein Rebellion Handbook following the Easter rising it treated the St. Patrick's day manoeuvres of the Irish Volunteers as the initial move in the rebellion. Two thousand men paraded which as has been pointed out was an insignificant number when contrasted with the 150,000 Irishmen in the British Army or the nominal strength of over 160,000 claimed by Redmond's National Volunteers. It was the openness and confidence with which the Irish Volunteers took over the streets of Dublin and the lack of official reaction which impressed observers, one of whom described the event as the first

30 See R. M. Fox, James Connolly, the Forerunner, op.cit., p.189.
"aggressive action in day light" to be taken by the Irish Volunteers. The centre of Dublin was occupied for two hours by illegally armed men carrying rifles and bayonets who distributed subversive literature while the police were nowhere to be seen. The leaflets distributed contained "twenty plain facts for Irishmen" which read in part:

It is the natural right of the people of every nation to have the free control of their own national affairs, and any body of the people is entitled to assert that right in the name of the people.

The Irish people have not the free control of their own national affairs.

Some of the Irish people do desire that freedom, and are entitled to assert the right of the nation.

The Irish Volunteers (under the presidency of Eoin MacNeill) are pledged to the course of the freedom of Ireland.

In raising, training, arming and equipping the Irish Volunteers as a military body, the men of Ireland are acquiring the power to obtain the freedom of the Irish Nation.

It is the duty of every Irishman who desires for his country her natural right of freedom and for himself the natural right of a free man, to be an Irish Volunteer.

The document illustrates clearly the romantic conception of the nation accepted by the Irish Volunteers as part of their ideology as well as revealing the basic idea of a leadership cadre which is fundamental to a revolutionary movement enjoying as little popular support as did Irish separatists

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33 Quoted in Leon O'Broin, *Dublin Castle and the 1916 Rising*, op. cit., p. 70.
34 Ibid.
35 *Sinn Fein Rebellion Handbook*, p. 5.
at this time.

A few days after this demonstration a shooting affray in Tullamore provided evidence of the unpopularity of the Irish Volunteers and of popular resentment of their posturings. A hostile crowd gathered outside the Irish Volunteer rooms in Tullamore and began throwing stones and bottles through the windows hitting some Volunteers and their girl friends. The Volunteers replied by shooting over the heads of the crowd and the police, who so far had not intervened, moved in ostensibly to protect the besieged Volunteers though they took advantage of the occasion to attempt to seize Volunteer arms and the Volunteers then used their weapons to effect. Two people, including a police sergeant, were wounded and a number of Volunteers were arrested.36

Despite some resentment of the Irish Volunteers, however, Irish public opinion viewed as undue persecution the arrest and deportation of Irish Volunteer organizers. Throughout the month of March there were an increasing number of prosecutions under the provisions of the Defense of the Realm Act for the use of seditious language or even, as in the case of Padraig O Conaire, for refusing to answer police in English.37 This official activity stirred emotions which were linked to the experience of the penal days in Ireland so that while the Irish people as a whole remained hostile to Sinn Fein and to the other groups clustered around its banner they were far

more hostile to the Castle administration. The deportation of Irish Volunteer organizers in fact provoked a large Mansion House protest meeting and it has been observed that:

The idea of banishment from Ireland was an ugly one in many Irish minds, and the hall was full and an overflow meeting was held outside it. It was this emotional area in Irish minds, with roots deep in Irish history, that Pearse and other members of the I R B's military council were determined to affect. Myth and reality had interacted on each other throughout Irish history. With a personal courage amounting almost to mania, Pearse and his fellow conspirators set out to turn the myth into reality by living it out in cold blood. 38

At the conclusion of this meeting there was a clash between members of the public who had participated in the meeting and the Dublin Metropolitan police. During the disturbance Inspector Barrett was shot thus contributing to the increasing tension being experienced in the capital. 39

Meanwhile Sinn Fein had begun to embarrass the Irish Parliamentary Party over the fact that Ireland's proportion of war taxation was far greater than her share of war expenditures. Meetings were held to protest at the imbalance, including a Mansion House meeting, and branches of the United Irish League began passing resolutions against the imposition of any further taxation of Ireland. John Redmond found himself compelled to reply and in a long letter addressed to Michael Governey of Carlow, but clearly intended for publication, he declared that:

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The agitation, which is now being worked up in response to the appeal from the Dublin Mansion House meeting of February 29th, is not calculated to strengthen the hands of the Irish Party in resisting unjust taxation. The meeting at which it was originated was admittedly called and controlled by men hostile to the Irish Party and to the constitutional movement in Ireland, men who are either avowedly pro-German or, at least, opposed to recruiting in Ireland, and committed to the monstrous doctrine that Ireland should remain neutral in the war. An agitation initiated and controlled by such men, whatever injury it may inflict upon the Irish Party, must manifestly be incapable of protecting Ireland from overtaxation or from any other injustice....We will continue to fight for Ireland's interests, and the pretence that an agitation started and controlled by pro-Germans and Sinn Feiners is needed to whip the Irish Party into doing their duty is a piece of colossal impudence.

I may add that the question of the future permanent financial settlement between Great Britain and Ireland, which must arise immediately the war is ended and the Home Rule Act has come into operation, is one of supreme importance. To raise it now during the war is the worst possible service that can be rendered to Ireland. To raise it in connection with the pro-German anti-recruiting campaign is nothing short of a crime against the Irish cause. The only conceivable security for a satisfactory settlement of this great question rests on Ireland doing her duty cheerfully and honourably during the war and on the maintenance of a thoroughly united National Party in Ireland to deal with this and other great questions when the war has been brought to a victorious end.40

John Dillon replied in much the same vein to a resolution pledging resistance to any increase in taxation passed by the Callan branch of the United Irish League.41 The success of the Sinn Fein agitation demonstrates that the frustrations of the political stagnation of the war years, when Home Rule came no closer but evidence of continued exploitation by

41Ibid.
England was becoming more prominent, were beginning to affect the supporters of the Irish Party at home. Sinn Fein was exploiting the discontent and the confusion of Party supporters and while it won few converts it did stimulate a greater intransigence on the part of the traditional nationalists and thus embarrassed the Party.

The Irish Parliamentary Party leaders were in a better position than their followers at home to judge the likelihood of influencing the Government to forego Irish revenues and they knew that no such appeal was likely to succeed in early 1916 when the war situation at the front was still highly precarious. There was the additional factor that John Redmond at this time was intent on demonstrating that the loyalty of Southern Ireland was as much to be relied upon as that of the North-East and he could hardly maintain that position if Ireland not only balked at conscription but also at financial support for the war effort. The new budget in fact increased income taxes and raised the duty on sugar, cocoa, coffee, matches, tobacco, amusements, mineral water and motor cars.\textsuperscript{42} The financial strain was becoming severe for Irish labour faced with prices which were reported to have risen by 51 per cent between March 1914 and March 1916.\textsuperscript{43} When the budget was announced, Dublin was in the midst of a strike for higher wages by workers in the construction industry and on the docks.\textsuperscript{44}

\textsuperscript{42}Ibid., 5 April, 1916.
\textsuperscript{43}Ibid., 8 April, 1916.
\textsuperscript{44}Cork Examiner, 3 April, 1916.
The Irish Party's prestige was also undermined by the appointment of James Campbell as Attorney-General for Ireland. The Irish Party had successfully resisted his appointment to the office of Lord Chancellor for Ireland at the formation of the Coalition but his new appointment, admittedly to a junior position, was a measure of the diminishing leverage of the Irish Party on the Government. The Government of the United Kingdom and the Irish people were once again at odds. The British Government had for a number of reasons refrained from extending conscription to Ireland, but there is no doubt that most of the Cabinet felt that in all fairness it ought to have been imposed. Not to have done so was to recognize the great difficulty of enforcement and the probable effect on Irish emigrants in America and Australia but it was also to have made a gigantic concession to Irish opinion and to the representations of the Irish Parliamentary Party. The Party leaders were aware of this and of the fact that they could expect little more from the Coalition Government. In Ireland, however, the exclusion from conscription was seen as no more than Ireland's due. Any other course would have been viewed as naked coercion and for most Irishmen who were not in close contact with official British opinion there was no reason why further concessions, such as exclusion from tax increases, should not be sought, particularly in view of the fact that Ireland's ability to pay had not increased at the same rate as had that of the rest of the United Kingdom through

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45 Freeman's Journal, 10 April, 1916.
the development and expansion of production for war.

In Ireland the increased activity amongst Irish Volunteers, many of whom in early April must have sensed that something was afoot, led to fears that the Government might react to the increasing provocation. The feeling of excitement had not been dampened significantly by the generally anti-German tone of the 1916 Lenten Pastorals. Most of the Roman Catholic Archbishops and Bishops had condemned the Germans and many had praised Irishmen for fighting against them but with the exception the Bishop of Clonfert, they had not shown themselves openly pro-British in the war. Now, a month later, the Irish Parliamentary Party was intent on persuading the Chief Secretary for Ireland that the increasing level of tension and the disturbances attendant upon it were not worthy of official notice. A leading article in the Freeman's Journal referred to a recent case where a Dublin tram conductor had been intimidated at gun point by an Irish Volunteer. The article hastened to point out that:

There is certainly no disaffection in Ireland that would make "stamping it out" a necessary or useful process. And the fact that hot-heads trail their coat-tails and ask for trouble is not good reason for gratifying them by responding to their invitation. The "strong man" in the present circumstances is the man with commonsense enough to know what not to do and with a liberal stock of patience.

In Augustine Birrell Ireland had a man with a seemingly inexhaustible supply of the commodity. He and Sir Mathew Nathan

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46 Freeman's Journal, 6 March, 1916. See also Roger McHugh, "The Catholic Church and the Rising" Irish Times, Special Supplement, 7 April, 1966.
47 11 April, 1916.
were aware of the revolutionary potential of the Irish Volunteers and fully conscious of the disloyal and seditious nature of the movement but they did not know what to do. They were relying on the knowledge and understanding of Ireland of the leaders of the Irish Party and they were loath to do anything which might involve the diversion of fighting troops from the front to domestic use or which might mean the loss of a valuable source of such troops. As Sir Mathew Nathan would soon explain to the Royal Commission on the Rebellion in Ireland:

The declaration of policy of the Irish Volunteers was not in itself, having regard to what had gone on before, such as to justify their suppression and when the increasing hostility due to various causes would have furnished such justification, there were other difficulties in the way of such a course which appeared insurmountable. Suppression meant, if not a complete disarmament, at any rate, strong coercive measures which to be effective would have had to go outside the Irish Volunteers and extend to the body from which they had seceded and were subsequently to some extent recruited. In the circumstances, especially if the Volunteers formed to resist Home Rule had been allowed to continue, nationalist opinion would have been completely alienated and with it that large body of Irish feeling which has been favourable to Great Britain in this war and since its commencement has sent some 55,000 Irish Catholics voluntarily to fight for the Empire and its allies.48

The extremists of the military council, however, were determined to stage a blood sacrifice whatever was the government’s attitude and the official caution did not reduce tension in Dublin. Sinn Fein’s anti-recruiting propaganda

campaign was becoming bolder, encouraged by the lack of response from the Irish Executive. Unionists were sensitive to the changing atmosphere and they were appalled at the supine attitude of the Government in the face of mounting provocation. Mr. Justice Kenny on 11th April publicly expressed the dismay with which unionists viewed what was going on in Dublin. While opening the proceedings of the Commission for the City of Dublin, Justice Kenny:

... referred to a propaganda in the city of an openly seditious character which set all authority at defiance, and seemed to be started in order to counteract the recruiting movement. They had, he said, read of the police, in the execution of their duty, being met and repulsed by men armed with rifle and bayonet, and of street disturbances in which firearms appeared to be freely used. What he regarded as the most serious attempt to paralyze recruiting was the display of large posters, such as "England's Last Ditch" and "The Pretence of the Realm Act" which must necessarily have a most mischievous and deterrent influence on certain classes of the population. He called attention to it because continuance of that state of things must have a tendency to create incalculable mischief.49

These remarks were resented by the leadership of the Irish Parliamentary Party intent on maintaining that Ireland presented no threat to the British war effort. They were also growing increasingly apprehensive at the prospect of the Government moving against the Irish Volunteers and creating a situation which they would be unable to control. The Freeman's Journal commented bitterly on Justice Kenny's remarks:

Let there be no mistake about it; if there is slackness anywhere in Ireland in support of England

49 Freeman's Journal, 12 April, 1916. See also Sinn Fein Rebellion Handbook, op. cit., p. 6.
in this war, it is due not to the newspaper placards which have shocked the soul of Judge Kenny that slept so quietly under the provocation of the Covenant, or to any of the other machinery of sedition, but to the working of that intrigue in English politics which just produced the Coalition Government and now gives us Mr. Campbell. If Irish zeal and eagerness in the conflict are not to be further chilled, let the coercionists keep their hands off Ireland. 50

Justice Kenny's speech was in fact later mentioned by John Dillon to Redmond as being one of the specific events which led to the Rising. 51

Augustine Birrell appeared content to accept the Irish Party's assessment of the situation though it seems that Sir Mathew Nathan, who was in constant touch with events in Dublin, while not contemplating the likelihood of an armed insurrection was growing uneasy. 52 The uneasiness of unionist elements was due in part to the activities of the Irish Volunteers and to the St. Patrick's day demonstration in particular, but it also owed something to the ill-checked dissemination of extremist propaganda, much of it from the pens of James Connolly and Patrick Pearse.

Connolly had long before manifested a quixotic side to his personality when it came to a fight with England. During the South African War, while a member of the pro-Boer "Transvaal Committee", he is reported to have urged a rebellion against what he considered an inadequate British garrison of 25,000 men. Despite the fact that the Irish were then without

50 13 April, 1916.
51 See Denis Gwynn, The Life of John Redmond, op. cit., p. 486.
arms he had argued "Have your revolution, and the arms will come afterwards" adding that they need have no fear of a naval bombardment since "A Capitalist Government will never destroy capitalist property". It is thus hardly surprising that he should have found it opportune to return to the idea of a revolution during a war which was occupying a far larger proportion of the British army and left an even smaller garrison in Ireland to confront Irishmen who were now armed. His articles throughout the war so far had urged the need to strike and the possibility of amateur soldiers defeating professional armies. That tone was continued in 1916 and in January, under the title "What is our Programme?", he wrote:

We shall continue, in season and out of season, to teach that the "far-flung battle-line" of England is weakest at the point nearest its heart, that Ireland is in that position of tactical advantage, that a defeat of England in India, Egypt, the Balkans or Flanders would not be so dangerous to the British Empire as any conflict of armed forces in Ireland, that the time for Ireland's battle is NOW, the place for Ireland's battle is HERE.

It was in January that Connolly was co-opted in the Irish Republican Brotherhood's Military Council and became a party to the rebellion planned by MacDermott, Clarke and Pearse. His subsequent writings were designed to keep the heat up without making the kettle boil over as he now knew that a revolution would occur and involve hopefully more than ten thousand Irish Volunteers most of whom were armed rather than

54 James Connolly, Labour and Easter Week, op.cit., p. 139.
Connolly's pitifully small Irish Citizen Army alone.

In March, when Connolly was fully a party to the planning of the rebellion, he wrote in a mystical style more reminiscent of Pearse's than of Connolly's previous writing,

In those days of March let us remember that generations, like individuals, will find their ultimate justification or condemnation not in what they accomplished but rather in what they aspired and dared to attempt to accomplish. The generation or the individual that is stricken down in the attempt to achieve a high and holy thing is itself therefore high and holy. By aspiring to reach a height the generation of the individual places its soul unassailably upon that height, even should its body be trampled in the mud at its base. Upon what height or in what sunless depth of corruption has this generation placed its soul?

Pearse had long been writing romantic and mystical articles concerning Ireland, the Irish-Ireland movement and the earlier rebellions against English rule. Yet a change has been noted in his writing during the war and particularly in late 1915 and early 1916. One commentator has described this change saying:

As Pearse moved into middle age, he became more desperate and violent. The tone of his earlier writings is meditative, lyrical, and human in his concern for education; but the tone of his later writing is not personal at all. The human voice is replaced by the shrill screech of crowd rhetoric. The imagery shows an almost pathological lust for violence. The desperation reveals just how much was at stake for Pearse psychologically, for if he stepped into old age without having taken arms, then his whole life, from his boyhood vow to the founding of his school, became meaningless and absurd. In the face of that threat, even action that failed would be a welcome relief

55 Ibid., p. 154.
At the beginning of February Pearse published an article on Tone in which he declared:

That God spoke to Ireland through Tone and through those who, after Tone, have taken up his testimony, that Tone's teaching and theirs is true and great and that no other teaching as to Ireland has any truth or worthiness at all, is a thing upon which I stake all my mortal and all my immortal hopes. And I ask the men and women of my generation to stake their mortal and immortal hopes with me.

In the addresses which he delivered in 1916 he called upon the audience to stand up and recite after him a credo of Ireland which ended with such a staking of mortal and immortal hopes in the truth and worthiness of Tone's teaching.

The teaching of Tone was quite explicitly based on hatred of England and the import of the "gospel of Irish nationality" as preached by Pearse became a gospel of hate to which Connolly failed to contribute much of his social vision. As Sean O'Faolain has observed, Connolly's co-optation into the Military Council was a victory for Irish nationalism rather than for the Irish proletariat and he added that:

From the point of view of Connolly's subsequent career and final fame, from the point of view of the subsequent career of Irish labour, ... it would surely have been far better if Connolly, since he would die, had gone out that winter night against the Castle, since even if he did no more than wave

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57 Political Writings and Speeches, op. cit., p. 293.
his sword like Emmet and call the loungers to follow him, he would at least have died for the poor. 59

It has been pointed out that the influence of Connolly upon Pearse is to be seen in the latter's article "The Sovereign People" in which for the first and only time he explicitly recognized the material basis for freedom. From a revolutionary point of view, however, there is another observation in this article which is perhaps more important. Pearse declared that: "Every man and every woman within the nation has normally equal rights, but a man or a woman may forfeit his or her rights by turning recreant to the nation". 60 Here we have the understanding of rights which could be used by the extremists to disregard the Irish Republican Brotherhood constitution and the Irish Volunteer constitution in pursuing a rebellion which was clearly contrary to the will of the overwhelming majority of the Irish people, to the majority of Irish Volunteers and probably even to the majority of the I.R.B. If Pearse and his fellow conspirators were to make good their claim to be asserting the rights of the Irish nation they had to deny that the Irish people could any longer decide their own destiny as envisaged in the I.R.B. constitution, and Pearse in this article provided one of the justifications for so doing. The second major justification was to link the efforts of the 1916 leaders with a long tradition of Irish

59 Constance Markievicz, op. cit., p. 143.
60 Political Writings and Speeches, op. cit., p. 338.
protest which in a Burkeian sense took precedence over the momentary wishes of the living Irish people. This also Pearse did through his articles on his predecessors.

Three weeks before the rising Pearse had declared that England was at war with Ireland which was also intended to make it easier to justify taking offensive military steps against England. "We all declare, and justly so", he wrote, "that until Ireland is restored to her place among the nations of the earth, come what may, we are at war with England. It is very patriotic, no doubt, and truly national, but what is the value of such declarations, if they are not supported by deeds". 61 He went on to propose a "strong and determined offensive" against the English enemy, asserting confidently that if this were done Irish troops at the front would turn on the English. 62 He accused of cowardice all who disagreed with his assessment of the choice facing Ireland to "be free-men" or "to remain as slaves and idly watch the final extermination of the Gael". 63 In the course of this article he derided the British army of conscripts who were the only force which could be sent to Ireland and urged that the time to strike was now while the regular army was on the continent. 64

Pearse expressed contempt for all who stood in his way, the Irish who did not share his conviction of the need for a

62 Ibid., p. 139.
63 Ibid., p. 141.
64 Ibid.
blood sacrifice to save Ireland as well as the British.
Desmond Ryan, a sympathetic commentator on the Easter rising has pointed out that: "It cannot be denied that the Military Council were fanatically bent on having their way and this blinded them to the slickness of the methods employed to involve their colleagues and to any moral issue at stake in their resort to what can most mildly be described as equivocation". This "equivocation" it has also been pointed out was justified in the minds of the members of the Military Council because:

The deception of MacNeill by such extreme measures as lying and forgery was not for reasons of security or secrecy; it was because MacNeill and his fellows, together with the overwhelming majority of the Irish people, were known to be opposed to extremist action. In fact the Rising could only begin by bringing men out to fight who had no way of knowing to what they were summoned; and this had to be done in violation of the constitution of both the Irish Republican Brotherhood and of the Irish Volunteers.

The secrecy was so complete that even Denis McCullough, the President of the Supreme Council of the Irish Republican Brotherhood was kept in ignorance of the plans of his subordinates.

The Irish Volunteer Executive was divided into two factions, the majority, including Eoin MacNeill, the president and chief of staff of the movement, pursued the open policy of building up the organization to become the embryo of an Irish army

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following the achievement of self-government after the war. Their policy was unconstitutional and subversive in so far as there was nothing in the Home Rule Act indicating that Ireland would have an army of its own but even Redmond's National Volunteers had aspirations to become a national armed force though they thought in terms of a territorial militia, a status for which the Irish Volunteers were not prepared to settle. The Irish Volunteers were at one in their opposition to recruiting being carried on in a non-self-governing Ireland but the majority of the Executive only contemplated hostilities in the event of either an attempt by the Government to disarm them or the imposition of conscription on Ireland in which case their plans called for a withdrawal into the hills and the waging of a guerilla war against the British forces. This was the official Irish Volunteer policy to which ostensibly the entire Executive was committed.

There was, however, a minority on the Executive which, unknown to the majority, was secretly planning a rebellion. This involved a putsch against MacNeill and the manipulation of the Irish Volunteers into combat behind the chief of staff's back. Much has been made of the fact that the insurrection of 1916, unlike previous attempts at revolt in Ireland, was never betrayed to the authorities but it must be said that one reason for this was that an insurrection in the middle of the war was so against the tenor of Irish public opinion and even of Irish separatist opinion that secrecy had to be
maintained to prevent not only the authorities from getting wind of the plans but also the friends and colleagues of the rebels themselves. One Irish historian, who resisted the almost overwhelming temptations to consider the rising of 1916 in the light of its ultimate consequences, concluded that:

The agreement to start a rebellion on Easter Monday, 1916, which was arrived at between Patrick Pearse, representing that small and quite unrepresentative secret society, the Irish Republican Brotherhood, formally condemned by the Church, and James Connolly, representing the labour force known as the Citizen Army, was a private pact made without the authority or knowledge of the Volunteer executive or of Eoin MacNeill, the Chief of Staff. The secret decision of the Irish Republican Brotherhood to raise a revolt in Ireland before the end of the war, arrived at in the autumn of 1914, was in fact alone responsible for the Rebellion. It was the decision of a small minority wing of the Volunteer organization for its own ends. It is hard to conceive a procedure more cynical or undemocratic or, from a Catholic point of view, more wicked.68

It must be borne in mind, however, that from Pearse's point of view MacNeill and all others who did not share Pearse's vision had forfeited their rights as Irishmen.

Bulmer Hobson, the Secretary and Quartermaster of the Irish Volunteers accidentally became aware of the plans of those of his colleagues who were members of the I.R.B. Military Council and he alerted Eoin MacNeill. MacNeill wrote a strong memorandum opposing the blood-sacrifice idea in particular which he planned to have individually endorsed by all members of the Executive. The memorandum was discussed at a meeting

but upon being assured by Pearse and MacDonagh that no rising was contemplated MacNeill did not put the integrity of his subordinates in question by requiring a formal endorsement. The Military Council continued to operate behind MacNeill's back after having thus convinced him that they were in agreement with official Volunteer policy. Immediately before the rising they made an attempt to convince MacNeill to join in their plans and he did waver when it seemed likely that Germany would intervene and had in fact already sent large quantities of weapons which would inevitably provoke official retaliation. However, the sinking of the Aud with all the weapons on board and the capture of Sir Roger Casement on the western shore of Ireland determined him to put an end to the projected rising by any means short of informing Dublin Castle.

Bulmer Hobson, with an impeccable separatist background, with deep roots in the I.R.B., was the main architect of the official Irish Volunteer policy adopted by MacNeill. He was better aware than his chief of what was happening and he took advantage of a Cumann na mBan meeting in Dublin on Palm Sunday to declare publicly that "no man has the right to sacrifice others merely that he might make for himself a bloody niche in history". The Military Council demonstrated a realistic


respect for Hobson's acumen by kidnapping him until the rising was well under way. MacNeill, even thus deprived of Hobson's support, was able to force the postponement of the rising and to restrict its scope. A few days before the planned rising a highly elaborate attempt to provoke the Irish Volunteers into following the official policy and moving out in strength seems to have been made. On 14th April Dublin Corporation had met to strike the Poor Rate for the city. Alderman T. Kelly, a Sinn Fein member, objected to the tenor of Justice Kenny's remarks and the Corporation refused to strike the Poor Rate by a vote of 12 to 13 in protest against these remarks. This necessitated the holding of a special session called expressly to strike the rate five days later. On this occasion the rate was struck by a vote of 18 to 10 but the session was the occasion of Alderman Kelly's introduction of what was called the "Castle Document".

The "Castle Document" was described by Alderman Kelly as a clandestinely obtained administrative instruction contemplating the suppression of the Irish Volunteers, the occupation of a number of points in Dublin where sedition was supposedly being planned including, somewhat improbably, the residence of Dr. Walsh, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, and the arrest of prominent figures in the Sinn Fein and Irish Volunteer movements. Dublin Castle immediately denounced the

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document as a forgery and the *Freeman's Journal* for once agreed and labelled it "the Bogus Document". While the authenticity of the document has never been fully refuted most commentators have agreed that it was in all likelihood a forgery. It did influence MacNeill for a brief period of time, however, and orders to the Irish Volunteers to prepare for battle were issued. Upon reflexion and with the help of Hobson's information regarding Pearse's plans he later concluded that the document was in fact a forgery. The document nevertheless had provided for the rebels an opportunity to place the Irish Volunteers on a war footing and had created considerable uneasiness among Sinn Feiners who were ever prepared to believe the worst of Dublin Castle. In any case it was certainly plausible that there existed contingency plans in the Castle files should the necessity of taking action against the Irish Volunteers arise. There were many military officers and a large number of unionists, including the influential Lord Midleton, who were convinced that such action would eventually become necessary and who were constantly trying to influence Augustine Birrell towards a more aggressive stance. As the hour chosen for the insurrection drew near Birrell was in London where a Cabinet crisis had arisen over the conscription issue. The Prime Minister had even warned of the possible break-up of the Coalition Government. On the following day a secret session

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73 21 April, 1916.
74 *Cork Examiner*, 20 April, 1916.
of Parliament to consider the manpower question was announced. This announcement raised the fears of Sinn Feiners who suspected that such a session might be designed to impose conscription of Ireland. Tension was therefore quite high in the last days of April 1916.

The Irish Executive was in fact preparing to act so that this time the Sinn Fein fears were not without foundation. Lord Wimborne, though without executive power as Lord Lieutenant, had finally convinced Sir Mathew Nathan that it was time to act. The absence of Mr. Birrell and the fact that, contrary to the implications of the Castle Document, military preparations would take some time, prevented a move against Liberty Hall, where the Military Council was meeting, until after the Easter holiday. The official apprehensions were also lulled by two events. First the Aud sank and Sir Roger Casement was arrested on the Kerry coast. Sir Roger had been an object of serious concern for the British Government. He had been known to be in Germany attempting to form an Irish Brigade of prisoners of war to take part in an Irish uprising. His efforts had been singularly unsuccessful even when abetted by an Irish-American priest who attempted to persuade the prisoners of the moral righteousness of joining such a brigade. The seducing of prisoners of war from their allegiance was particularly distasteful to British opinion and indeed Sir Roger Casement himself had denounced in very strong language

75 Ibid., 21 April, 1916.
the Boer attempts to do precisely what he was now engaged in during the South African War. That and the glamour and distinction of Sir Roger had persuaded the British authorities of his indispensability to any rebellion. The British authorities were also convinced that the Irish Volunteers had insufficient arms for a rising and the loss of the Aud's cargo was therefore seen as crucial. The second event to allay British apprehensions was the cancellation by Eoin MacNeill of the Irish Volunteer manoeuvres scheduled for Easter Sunday which was carried by the Sunday Independent of 23 April. Unaware, as was most of Ireland, of the fanatical determination to strike on the part of the extremists of the Military Council the authorities relaxed and prepared to deal with the Irish Volunteers at leisure.

The plans for the insurrection were severely disrupted by the ultimate inability of the Military Council to dupe MacNeill and by the capture of the Aud. Men less possessed of the myth of blood-sacrifice and more conscious of military requirements might well have been deterred. However, the plans had been made and the rebel leaders had become convinced of the imperative need to strike. The disruption of their plans did impress upon the insurgent leaders the military hopelessness of their venture but they had in any case been prepared to justify their actions on grounds other than that of immediate success. The point has been made that:

Since Pearse, Connolly and the other leaders had foreseen that military defeat was almost inevitable
it was natural they should justify their decision to revolt as a victory of the spirit over materialism. Being religious-minded men they drew their imagery from the bible, particularly from the passion, death and resurrection of Christ.\textsuperscript{76}

In St. Enda's, Patrick Pearse's school, the secret of the Easter Rising had been revealed to a group of University College, Dublin students living in the school as early as March.\textsuperscript{77} And it was at St. Enda's that Pearse in an address to the students before the Easter vacation gave a strong hint of what was planned during that holiday. He declared that "It took the blood of the Son of God to redeem the world. It will take the blood of the sons of Ireland to redeem Ireland".\textsuperscript{78} For Pearse at any rate it is clear that the need to strike was greater than the need to win and most of his colleagues appeared to have shared his attitude though Michael Hayes who was a close friend of Thomas MacDonagh and who was with him in Jacob's during the rising commented that MacDonagh "cherished the view that success in the rising was possible".\textsuperscript{79} MacDonagh who was a closer friend of MacNeill than any of the other members of the Military Council may have needed such a delusion to justify the deception of his chief. Pearse needed only the support of his love of his personal myth of Ireland which justified the

\textsuperscript{76}F. X. Martin, "1916-Myth, Fact and Mystery", op.cit., p.116.


\textsuperscript{79}"Thomas MacDonagh and the Rising", op. cit., p. 48.
sacrifice of his own life as well as that of others. Sean MacDermott's determination to rise was no less than Pearse's and his biographer has reported that when it appeared that Eoin MacNeill had successfully intervened to prevent the rebellion "he became physically sick.... He rent the coat of his pyjamas to shreds, crying inconsolably that we were betrayed again". 80

The certainty of defeat was to such men no reason to abandon their objective which was to rise against British rule in the name of an ancient tradition of such risings more than in the name of the living and breathing people of Ireland who, while obviously less than perfectly content with their lot, were clearly not in a rebellious mood. Ideologically Alfred Cobban's observation that "the Sinn Fein rebellion in Ireland was not against the misgovernment of a twentieth century British government, it was a revolt in the name of four centuries of history" is accurate. 81 There is nonetheless something disturbing about men who will their own deaths and seek it as persistently as Pearse, MacDermott, MacDiarmada, Clarke and their colleagues. Part of their motivation was no doubt a religious frenzy for which Pearse's deliberate identification with Christ was largely responsible. A student of modern Ireland has commented that:

Pearse preached the need of a "blood sacrifice", thus attaching a religious connotation to the I.R.B.'s


81 The Nation-State and National Self-Determination, op. cit., p. 146.
traditional policy of force. Consequently, the 1916 Rising meant more than a military or propaganda gesture, it was part of a quasi-religious ritual. It was a form of national therapy, a Spenglerian catharsis which would renew the Irish soul.\textsuperscript{82}

Without this religious connotation the rising under the circumstances following MacNeill's countermanding order might never have occurred. The transformation of the rising into a quasi-religious ritual eased the prospect of death. The process has been described by Eric Hoffer:

Dying and killing seems easy when they are part of a ritual, ceremonial, dramatic performance or game. There is need for some kind of make-believe in order to face death unflinchingly. To our real, naked selves there is not a thing on earth or in heaven worth dying for. It is only when we see ourselves as actors in a staged (and therefore unreal) performance that death loses its frightfulness and finality and becomes an act of make-believe and a theatrical gesture. It is one of the main tasks of a real leader to mask the grim reality of dying and killing by evoking in his followers the illusion that they are participating in a grandiose spectacle, a scheme or light-hearted dramatic performance.\textsuperscript{83}

The same author commented also on another feature which was very much a part of the thinking of the Irish rebel leaders and which made it easier to die for a cause when he wrote that:

An historical awareness also imparts a sense of continuity. Possessed of a vivid vision of past and future, the true believer sees himself part of something that stretches endlessly backward and forward—something eternal. He can let go of the present (and of his own life) not only because it is a poor thing, hardly worth hanging on to, but also because it is not the beginning and end of all things. Furthermore, a vivid awareness of past

\textsuperscript{82}Michael Sheehy, \textit{Is Ireland Dying: Culture and the Church in Modern Ireland}, op. cit., p. 67.

\textsuperscript{83}\textit{The True Believer}, op. cit., p. 64.
and future robs the present of reality. It makes the present seem as a section in a procession or a parade.  

Men like Clarke, embittered by his long imprisonment and his difficulties earning a living in Ireland; Pearse, the unsuccessful barrister, though brilliant educator, faced with financial difficulties threatening his school's existence; MacDonagh, frustrated in his bid for a chair at University College; Cork, a talented poet with a romantic craving for glory which was eluding him; Plunkett, a man at the doors of death but with a burning desire to be a man of action; MacDiarmada, the failed schoolmaster crippled by disease and Connolly, the labour leader dreaming of breaking the shackles of the Irish proletariat but only capable of retaining his position through the support of naked bayonets, these were men to whom the present meant less than history and they were able to see their action as a dramatic tableau with mystical connotations. Thomas Ashe, destined shortly to become himself a martyr to Ireland and the commander of one of the few successful sorties of the Irish Volunteers outside Dublin during the rising, testified to the ideological success of his leaders when he wrote from prison to a Roman Catholic cleric:  

I am sure you would like to hear from me about Easter Week but I am sorry to say that is a closed book to me while here but I may be allowed to say that few can tell as much of its beauties as I. Its religious effect on us all is the one most in evidence here. The Parish Priest of Lusk used to call me a modernist and an anticleric but I don't know if he could understand the happiness I felt  

84 Ibid., p. 69.
while awaiting the sentence of death in Kilmainham Prison. It was a beautiful experience. 85

There can be no doubt that the rebellion's leaders were willing and even eager to sacrifice themselves out of love for Ireland. The realization of this motive of love for country by the public would later contribute to their popular favour but it should not be overlooked that such self-sacrificing love "is essentially a masochistic yearning and rooted in the symbiotic need of the person involved". 86 The leaders of the Easter rebellion were mostly men who were driven by a psychological need to transcend either physical infirmity or a sense of personal failure or inadequacy which unconsciously drove them to the sacrificial gesture of Easter Monday, 1916.

The details of the Easter rising have passed into history and have been exhaustively related as being one of the most glorious episodes in modern Irish history. What is important to remember in connexion with contemporary Irish public opinion is that despite the words of Pearse, Connolly and others the rising itself was unexpected, it was also thoroughly unpopular with most Irish people and with the inhabitants of Dublin, who saw their city reduced to a shambles, in particular, and it was unrepresentative. No more than a small minority of the Irish Volunteers themselves took part in the rebellion

85 Quoted in Sean O Luing, I Die in a Good Cause, op.cit.,p.113.
and many of those who did could not have known, on that sunny Easter Monday morning as they mustered for manoeuvres, that they were going into action. Father Martin has pointed out that:

According to official statistics there were 150,183 Irishmen on active service for the Crown in April 1916; the number of Irish in arms against the Crown during Easter Week in Dublin was between 1,550 and 1,600. The figures are not an unfair representation of what the country as a whole thought of a choice between 'Sinn Feiners' and the Irish Parliamentary Party.87

This observation does, however, neglect the same large group of Irishmen that were also neglected by the rebels - the unionists, who made up a disproportionately large share of 150,183 Irishmen serving the Crown.

It is not clear what, beyond a spiritual effect, the rebels hoped to accomplish. It has been suggested that the men of the Military Council hoped for one of three outcomes. The whole of Ireland might rise up in arms which, while improbable given the state of public opinion, appeared the most desirable outcome; or the Germans might send an invasion force, which was at least equally improbable. The Germans were at this time trying to encourage Breton and Provençal nationalism as well as the Irish variety but they were unlikely to divert valuable western front troops for any of these ventures however valuable they might be from the point of view of proving an embarrassment to the enemy. Finally, and this was a practical purpose to which the rebel leaders clung

87 F. X. Martin, "1916 - Myth, Fact and Mystery", op.cit., p. 64.
until death as a utilitarian justification for the violence which they had unleashed, the Military Council entertained the curious concept that if they could hold out long enough—a period of time on which no firm agreement was reached—Ireland would win belligerent status at the peace conference anticipated at the end of the war. The advantages of such a status in the event of a German defeat were never made clear. The rebels were convinced that God being on their side, He could not possibly be also on England's side in the war. In effect they willed Germany's victory. Whatever outcome was expected as a practical consequence of the rising it was abundantly clear from the fate of Home Rule so far that no more radical tampering with the Union could conceivably effect a closer unity between the Protestant unionists of Ulster and the nationalists of Ireland. Tone had entertained the hope that separatism would prove a unifying force in Ireland; in 1916 such a perspective manifested extreme ideological distortion. Ironically the issue which more than any other sealed the fate of the John Redmond and of the Irish Parliamentary Party was totally ignored by the heroes who replaced him in the esteem of the public. Pearse, true to the letter of Tone's teaching, proved false to the spirit of one of its central tenets.

The Cork Examiner leading article on Easter Monday, as the bullets began to strike home in Dublin, makes interesting

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reading. When the paper went to press Cork had received no news of the events taking place in the capital but this article reflects the profound weariness of the period.

The situation that has been created by the war in many parts of the United Kingdom, however unpleasant it may look to the ordinary man, had been evolved by conditions that are in themselves unusual and disturbing. No part of these island countries has been free from internal trouble. In Wales the miners have given the authorities cause for grave anxiety; in Scotland workers on arms that we are told are of vital importance for the carrying on of the war at a critical moment threw down their tools, while hardly an English port has been free from disputes, with the result that traffic has been impeded and become congested almost to an unprecedented degree. Ireland has been fortunately spared much of the dislocation that has hit our neighbours pretty hard, but we have to deplore a menace which has, indeed, been largely exaggerated for party purposes, but still whose existence we must admit. We allude to those men, mostly young and inexperienced in most instances, who have defied or disregarded the advice of the elected representatives of the people, and without mandate or justification have set out to take the course which they believe is best in the interests of Ireland, though warned by those who know that they are not only endangering themselves but the cause of their Country. They form, we believe, only a fraction of the people and are generally known as the party of Sinn Fein...

The article ended: "Mere hatred of England, it has to be recollected, does not always ensure that one is not a traitor to Ireland". 89

No one would suggest seriously now that Pearse and his companions were traitors to Ireland but that they sacrificed the hope of Irish unity for generations to come was certainly one of the negative consequences of the Easter rising. 90

89 24 April, 1916.

90 On this see R. Dudley Edwards, "The Achievement" Irish Times Special Supplement, 7 April, 1966.
Initially the rising in Dublin was not greeted any more enthusiastically in nationalist Ireland than it was in Protestant Ulster. When the news of the insurrection reached Cork an angry, outraged crowd surrounded the headquarters of the Irish Volunteers.\(^{91}\) In Dublin prevailing opinion was also hostile to the insurgents. Despite the evident heightening of tensions in Dublin since mid-March the rising caught most people quite by surprise. Even the Irish Volunteers, who were for the most part thoroughly confused by the conflicting orders emanating from Volunteer headquarters, were in most cases entirely ignorant of the plans. The Military Council had kept its secret well, so well that it proved a severe handicap once the time for planning was over. The members of the Council all fought in Dublin so that local commanders outside Dublin were in the dark. Detailed plans had only been elaborated for the city of Dublin. Outside the capital the German weapons being brought in by the _Aud_ were the key to operations in the south-west corner and in the north what plans there were called for the Irish Volunteers from Ulster to march under arms from Dungannon to Galway, over two hundred miles away, through the unionist stronghold of Enniskillen, where the British army had a strong garrison, and enjoined upon them the strict injunction not to fire a single shot before reaching Galway. Denis McCullough, the president of the Supreme Council of the Irish Republican Brotherhood and as such, according to that organization's

constitution, the rightful president of the Irish Republic "virtually established", attempted to question these impractical orders but the only reply he received from Pearse and Connolly was "that is an order, obey it strictly". McCullough had been in Dublin during the week preceding the rising and despite the fact that he stayed in Tom Clarke's house and that he was the head of the revolutionary party in Ireland he was unable to obtain much information concerning the planned insurrection. Sean MacDermott who frequently visited Clarke's house during this period even refused to talk to him.

The minoritarian character of the rising is thus confirmed when it becomes obvious that even the Irish Republican Brotherhood, its Supreme Council and its president were merely used by the small group of largely co-opted members of the Military Council as a convenient vehicle for insurrection.

The rising lasted almost one week and the details of the fighting have been studied in depth and related at length. There are, however, a few points concerning that week which need to be made here. Events during the rising demonstrated that beyond the determination to rise Pearse and his colleagues had little notion of what was to follow. The Proclamation which Pearse read to a few bystanders in front of the General Post Office proclaimed a republic yet the conversation with

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92 Denis McCullough, "The Events in Belfast", op. cit., p. 383.
Pearse and Plunkett reported by Desmond Fitzgerald reveal that republicanism was not a strong element in their ideology, they were quite prepared to settle for a monarchy under Prince Joachim of Germany. They also spoke of the rising as being glorious by itself without reference to what might occur afterwards. Despite the fact that it soon became obvious that the rising would be put down, Pearse remained convinced that the death of the more than one thousand Irish Volunteers who had followed him was justified. It was worthwhile because, as Pearse said in the G.P.O.: "Dublin's name will be glorious for ever. Men will speak of her as one of the splendid cities, as they speak now of Paris. Dublin! Paris!" Pearse appears to have been unaware that the purely nationalist and anti-British ideological character of the Dublin uprising was very different from that of the revolutions associated with Paris where concern for universal values had constituted a universal appeal. Pearse's revolution was failing even as an appeal to the Irish people but even if it had been popular with Ireland it would have been no more than a provincial separatist uprising against the central government of the United Kingdom. Dublin as a revolutionary city is part of the history of anti-colonialism, Paris is part of the history of emancipation of mankind. One cannot help but feel that Pearse would have been quite content with a far more coercive form of government than British government had

95 Ibid., p. 142.
96 Quoted in Desmond Ryan, The Man Called Pearse, op. cit., p. 58.
been for decades past; if only it had been Irish.

James Connolly, whose values transcended narrow provincialism, identified nationalism as a necessary preliminary step in the fight for human emancipation from the forces of oppression, but dying in a nationalist uprising he was unable to contribute a broader notion of freedom to the Easter rising.

George Russell writing to Charles Weekes in August 1916 observed that:

Personally I believe there would have been no revolt if the employers and authorities had not been so unmerciful and unjust during the great strike. They left labour inflamed. I wrote then a letter, suppressed here, but which appeared in The Times in which I said "if the authorities were wanting to make Dublin a place with the bombs blazing in the streets they were going the right way about it". It was labour supplied the personal element in the revolt. It had a real grievance. The cultural element, poets, Gaels, etc. never stir more than one percent of a country. It is only when economic injustice stirs the workers that they unite their grievance with all other grievances. The stirring element in this was labour. Connolly was the strongman and intellect in the rising and he, I believe, was firing at the Sinn Feiners as people who talked and did nothing for many months. But our politicians all want to make party capital out of the trouble and they hate labour questions being discussed as they are all equally inhuman in regard to them.97

This is to underestimate the determination to have a blood sacrifice at all costs which was part of Pearse's motivation in particular but as Robert Kee has observed:

The professions of the young men finally arrested in the Tullamore case give a useful cross-section of the social stratum from which the Irish Volunteer

rank and file of the day was drawn. They consisted of a clerk, a barber's assistant, an apprentice, a malt house workman, a blacksmith's assistant, a drayman, a painter, a cycle mechanic and a labourer. Local police elsewhere described the Volunteers as being composed principally of shop assistants, artizans and, in the country districts, of small farmers' sons, while an English eye-witness of the occupation of the Post Office in Dublin a month later - who, incidentally, had the nerve to go in and ask for stamps before the Republic could be officially proclaimed - also commented on the fact that the rebels seemed drawn from the poorer classes. 98

The poorer classes then provided the cannon fodder for the Military Council's venture into revolution just as they were providing the cannon fodder on the European continent and with as little benefit to show for it once the fight ended. Yet the impact of their particular problems on the ideology of the rising was minuscule, just as it had very little to do with Allied war aims. In the Irish case as Sean O'Faolain has said: "The only man of all those revolutionaries who had a shred of social policy, the only man who might have known, that is, what to do with success if it had come to them, flung away his life in one magnificent gesture of waste". 99 And in the end all that remained of Connolly's involvement in the Easter rising was "the memory of his name and the oblivion of his faith". 100

The chronicle of the rebellion written while it was under way by James Stephens, whose sympathies were quite clearly with the rebels, shows that throughout the week, when most of

98 The Green Flag, op. cit., p. 553.
99 Constance Markievicz, op. cit., p. 143.
100 Ibid., p. 142.
central Dublin was in rebel hands, popular feeling was opposed to the Volunteers though it also suggests that this opposition was not unmixed with that element of ambivalent admiration which in Ireland was accorded to those who struck a blow against England regardless of how wrong headed their action might otherwise be considered. 101 Stephens, a poet, was quicker than the masses to sympathize with his fellow poets and to sympathize with their blood sacrifice idea. In the introduction to his book written shortly after the rebellion he commented that:

> If, after all her striving, freedom had come to her as a gift, as a peaceful present such as is sometimes given away with a pound of tea, Ireland would have accepted the gift with shamefacedness, and have felt that her centuries of revolt had ended in something very like ridicule. The blood of brave men had to sanctify such a consummation if the national imagination was to be stirred to the dreadful business which is the organizing of freedom, and both imagination and brains have been stagnant in Ireland this many a year. 102

Republicanism in that very special Irish meaning which could tolerate the idea of a German king more readily than it would have accepted an English president became, through Pearse's efforts, a quasi-religious value for many Irish people. Pearse's emphasis on the religious nature of Irish nationalism inspired some of those who took part in the rising and converted the fight against British rule into a sacred crusade. In the west of Ireland in particular a number of priests

102 Ibid., p. xii.
became involved in the separatist movement though most of
them seem to have been quite suspicious of Connolly's in-
volveinent.  

Not all priests supported separatism, however, and the first priest sent from the pro-Cathedral at the rebels' request to act as chaplain to the garrison of the General Post Office was sent back on the grounds that he had always been an opponent of Irish republican ideals. An instance of the kind of religious exaltation seen in the case of Thomas Ashe was reported by Countess Markievicz who related that in the midst of the fighting around St. Stephen's Green she was told by a number of the girls serving there "What is there to be afraid of? Won't I go straight to heaven if I die for Ireland?"

The British army methodically set out to crush the rebellion and on the whole this was done at the cost of a minimum number of lives. The rebels had anticipated bayonet charges through the doors of the General Post Office but other than the case of the Mount Street Bridge area, where some of the troops thought they were in France facing Germans, the British were parsimonious with the lives of soldiers badly needed at the front. They chose to use a few small cannons and a gun boat to shell rebel positions rather than attempt frontal assaults. The use of artillery to shell Jacobs and Sackville Street came as a shock to the insurgents who had been assured by Connolly

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and MacDonagh that the British would never shell capitalist property. The field pieces used were clearly insufficient to destroy the buildings occupied by the Volunteers and as a military historian of the rising pointed out "the physical damage they caused to buildings were small, their real use was to weaken Volunteer morale and, by using incendiary shells, cause fires which spread and forced the evacuation of outposts and finally the Headquarters at the G.P.O."\(^{106}\)

On the whole the British army showed what has been described as "wonderful restraint",\(^ {107}\) but there were a few incidents which later affected the temper of Irish opinion and pushed it into a firmly anti-British position. One of Dublin's best known eccentrics, Francis Sheehy-Skeffington as well as two other men totally unconnected with the rising were shot by an Irish officer who earlier in the war had been welcomed back home from the front with severe wounds.\(^ {108}\) Eventually this officer, Captain Bowen-Colthurst, was found to be insane but not before an ill-considered attempt by the British military authorities to hush up the whole matter had raised tempers even further. Another incident concerned a number of civilians shot in the North King Street area where fighting and sniping had been particularly heavy. The allegation made was that British soldiers had indiscriminately murdered civilians in the area. General Maxwell later

\(^{108}\) Cork Examiner, 28 September, 1914.
commented on these charges saying:

The casualties were very heavy during this fighting. The troops were continually fired at from the roofs and upper windows of the houses. With modern rifles it is impossible to tell by the sound the exact direction from which a bullet comes. The rebels were moving from house to house. As the troops, for instance, moved along the streets the rebels would escape round the back doors and fire again on the troops from behind practically every house there. Five had to be searched and occupied...

Possibly unfortunate incidents, which we should regret now, may have occurred. It did not, perhaps, always follow that where shots were fired from a particular house the immates were always necessarily aware of it or guilty, but how were the soldiers to discriminate? They saw their comrades killed beside them by hidden and treacherous assailants, and it is even possible that under the horror of this particular attack some of them 'saw red'. That is the inevitable consequence of a rebellion of this kind. It was allowed to come into being among these people, and could not be suppressed by velvet-glove methods where our troops were so desperately opposed and attacked.109

Father Walter McDonald found such an explanation plausible and he wrote of the North King Street incidents that:

This had been a hot corner, and stories were told afterwards of domiciliary visits paid by the military, and of non-combattants shot in cold blood and buried in the cellars. That such men were shot, I can well believe; as also that they were buried by someone; but in a place where I myself saw bricks removed, plainly with a view to firing down the street, one should not, I think, be too hard on the soldiers exposed to such sniping, if on searching the houses they found men and took them for their assailants. In the circumstances mistakes were pardonable.110


Dubliners, however, were in no mood to be forgiving of anything which the English did to them. They had too long been accustomed to blame England for all their misfortunes to change when the British army was clearly involved and where British dilatoriness and secretiveness in conducting investigation in these incidents only served to strengthen their conviction of deliberate malevolence.

The resentment which army officers felt towards Ireland in any case was greatly increased by the fighting of Easter Week. The civil as well as the military servants of the Crown in Ireland were disillusioned. The Irish Parliamentary Party blamed the Government for bringing Ireland to the point where rebellion had occurred. These feelings were to be reflected particularly clearly in the speeches of John Dillon following the rising.\[111\] The Government was also blamed by unionists and by many in the military and civil administration of Ireland, though their perspective was naturally quite different from that of nationalists. The anonymously recorded views of one of the garrison of Trinity College during the week illustrates the unionist point of view. The author, who was observing his city from the Fire Brigade lookout tower next to Trinity College, reflected:

And from this tower, looking over unhappy Dublin, stretching like a map beneath us, we seem to be reviewing the whole miserable story. The growth of lawlessness, dating back to days of cattle-driving and boycotting. To the landlords every evil was to

be traced. Settle the land question and you would have a peaceful and prosperous Ireland. Well the landlords are gone and still you have rebellion. The long pernicious Aberdeen régime, year by year bringing authority more and more into contempt. The laxity towards the Larkinite movement; the folding of the hands no matter what might be done in Liberty Hall. 'We serve neither King nor Kaiser, but Ireland'; stood for months writ across the face of that house of sedition; but still all was well. Then we have the pressure for Home Rule, leading to the arming of the North. Next comes the arming of the South. Finally arises the usual rift between the 'constitutional' and the unconstitutional. All these long series of ominous events mishandled, or not handled at all, by a helpless Government.112

The attitude of the civil servants is perhaps best summed up by that of Mr. Norway, the Secretary to the Irish Post Office, who had never been informed that the armed guard on duty at the General Post Office was not provided with ammunition. On Easter Monday he had been summoned by Sir Matthew Nathan and was in Dublin Castle when the G.P.O. was occupied by the insurgents. His comment on the affair was that had he been in his own office:

"I presume I ought to have tried to hold the staircase, and keep the mob down. I hope I should have done so. The certain result would have been that I should have been shot at once, and the probable result would have been that the Government in London would have declared the whole trouble to have arisen from my wicked folly in firing on a body of peaceful, if armed citizens. So much one sees clearly, for politicians in a difficulty are never fair, and still less generous, but all else is dark."113

Cynicism towards one's political masters is an occupational

113 Quoted in Leon O'Broin, Dublin Castle and the 1916 Rising, op. cit., p. 95.
hazard of being a civil servant but the deep cynicism manifested here by a senior official who was by all accounts successful and popular in Ireland is not developed without some basis and the basis here was the lack of action by politicians in the face of escalating provocation.

It was the attitude of the military which would be crucial in the months ahead for, with the proclamation of martial law following the outbreak of violence in Dublin, they assumed the government of Ireland. Senior officers in Ireland had for some time been advising the Chief Secretary to take firmer action against the Irish Volunteers and British naval intelligence had warned of an upcoming rising in Ireland some time before the outbreak of Easter Monday. Clifford King has commented:

It is small wonder that army officers serving in Ireland should have felt so impatient with the politicians who, for whatever reason, had allowed things to get into such a state, and only when the situation appeared hopeless called upon the military to retrieve it. On the other hand, it might be argued, such was the function of the armed forces in those conditions: to uphold the authority of the state, to protect life and property, when to do so was beyond the capacity of the civil power. But the frustration in the military mind was understandable: their government had not made the Army's task easier. The soldiers' resentment of what they considered the politicians' muddling through and their own professional frustrations increased as the situation in Ireland worsened with the passing of the years. That the situation need not have worsened is arguable; but that it did was something else for which the British government was blamed.\textsuperscript{114}

\textsuperscript{114} The Orange and the Green, op. cit., p. 63.
The Dublin uprising occurred at a moment when pressure on the British army at the front was intense and the military perceived a much greater degree of German involvement than was actually the case. The sinking of the Aud with its arms cargo and the reference to "gallant allies in Europe" in the Proclamation of the Republic lent strength to their opinion that the rising was in effect a German attack launched from behind the British lines. Yet unlike the Germans many of the insurgents wore no uniform and fired soft-nosed, uncased lead bullets which had been outlawed by the Hague Geneva-Convention of 1911.\textsuperscript{115} In the case of the Irish regiments which were involved in the suppression of the Rising the fight assumed even more of the full bitterness of a civil war than it did for British troops. Piaras Beaslai had revealed that the insurgents in fact had hoped that such regiments would refuse to fight against the Volunteers.\textsuperscript{116} He also noted with some dismay that in many cases Irish troops manifested a special animus towards the rebels. For Irish soldiers who saw their voluntary service in the British army as a contribution towards Home Rule, as John Redmond had repeatedly asserted, the rising could only be seen as a betrayal of their sacrifices in the war. And as to refusing to fight against the rebels, the shooting of an unarmed Dublin Metropolitan Policeman, very much an Irishman, by the rebels as he attempted to close the gates to Dublin Castle was not an encouraging example.


\textsuperscript{116}Michael Collins and the Making of a New Ireland, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 102.
Following the surrender, when the prisoners were being marched to the barrack where they were to be detained it is obvious from all accounts that the crowds of Dubliners lining the streets were hostile to the rebels. They called for the shooting or bayoneting of the whole lot of them, spat on them and cursed them as they marched along. Troops on occasion had to threaten the crowds with naked bayonets to protect their prisoners from physical attack. The situation was a delicate one and public opinion was hostile because for the moment it viewed the rebellion as a betrayal of the Irish war effort and of the long struggle for Home Rule. The fact that it was a betrayal of the United Kingdom and of England which, not surprisingly, was how the British viewed it was not part of the Irish perception. These different perceptions of events and the inability of the British military and civil administration to understand the Irish perception of what had occurred was at the root of much of the change which took place in Irish public opinion over the following months. One of the elements which the British failed to perceive was that the rebellion had been as much a revolt against the Irish Parliamentary Party's long domination of Irish political life as against the British connexion itself. The two motives had in fact come together during the war and the extremists had been motivated in part because they were repelled at the notion of the strongest

political force in Ireland making common cause with the British. The attitude of the Dublin crowds indicated that initially at least the extremists had lost the moral as well as the military battle.

The last action of the Provisional Government of the Irish Republic before the military surrender was recorded in a minute of that government dated 29 April, 1916 from the final headquarters of the insurgents in Moon Street. The minute read:

Believing that the glorious stand which has been made by the soldiers of Irish freedom during the last five days in Dublin has been sufficient to gain recognition of Ireland's national claim at an international peace conference, and desirous of preventing further slaughter of the civil population and to save the lives of as many as possible of our followers, the members of the Provisional Government here present have agreed by a majority to open negotiations with the British Government.118

This document indicates that the decision to put an end to the fighting was not unanimous and it confirms the odd delusion of the rebels concerning the peace conference and their position there. The decision to surrender does indicate that the blood-lust of Pearse and of the majority of his colleagues had been sated; the death of non-combattants, inevitable in a fight carried on in residential quarters of a large city, had convinced them to give up and not to wait for the massacre of that last Volunteer which seems to have

been the earlier plan.\textsuperscript{119}

Militarily the rising was a failure, the entire operation had been planned defensively and in a provincial capital. Had Dublin been the seat of British Government, the plan to seize the capital might have been reasonable as part of a coup d'\textsuperscript{\textsc{et}}\textsuperscript{at} but under the circumstances prevailing in Dublin, to commit all the forces at the disposal of the extremists to defensive position in prominent buildings was, as has been said, "imaginatively planned with artistic vision and with exceptional military incompetence".\textsuperscript{120}

Following the rising the situation in Ireland was naturally tense. However, the military rout of the rebels was complete and no groups had taken to the hills to continue the fight. The proclamation of martial law which had been put into effect on 27 April was accepted as justified during actual combat.\textsuperscript{121} In its first leading article devoted to the Dublin events published on the day before the surrender the Cork Examiner described the outbreak as "lamentable" but it also attempted to place the entire blame on Liberty Hall, on communists rather than Sinn Feiners or nationalist extremists.\textsuperscript{122} This attribution

\textsuperscript{119} Desmond Fitzgerald in Memoirs of Desmond Fitzgerald, op. cit., pp. 137-142-145 gives a number of indications that in the early part of the week death for all either in combat or by execution was the only ultimate fate envisaged by Pearse and the other leaders.

\textsuperscript{120} F. X. Martin, "1916 - Myth, Fact and Mystery", op. cit., p. 9. See also F. X. Martin, "The 1916 Rising - a Coup d'\textsuperscript{\textsc{et}}\textsuperscript{at} or a "Bloody Protest"? Studia Hibernica No. 8 (1968).

\textsuperscript{121} Cork Examiner, 27 April, 1916.

\textsuperscript{122} 28 April, 1916.
of blame illustrates that even while the rising was in progress the influence of extreme separatists with their determination to stage a sacrifice was not realized in Cork. It is hardly surprising therefore that if the character of the rising could be misapprehended in Cork it should also have been misunderstood in London. There of course blame was ascribed to Germany rather than to Liberty Hall. Condemnation of the rising began to be voiced before the surrender in all parts of Ireland. The Cork County Council adopted a resolution condemning the rising on the Friday and presented its assurances to "His Majesty of their loyal support in the war and in the government of the country" and National Volunteers in Cork and Tipperary offered their services to maintain order.\textsuperscript{123}

It is significant in the light of subsequent events and attitudes that the Government made no response to these offers of support or to the offer of a public meeting of the citizens of Mullingar who unanimously passed a resolution offering to assist the civil and military authorities in any capacity.\textsuperscript{124}

These resolutions and many others from various civic bodies and from National Volunteers throughout the country lend support to F.S.L. Lyon's observation that:

We know from contemporary evidence that the insurrection did present the British with a real chance to discredit not only the I.R.B., the Volunteers and the Citizen Army, but also Sinn Fein and every form of extreme nationalism. People were angry at the ruin of their city, many

\textsuperscript{123}\textit{Cork Examiner}, 29 April, 1916.

\textsuperscript{124}\textit{Ibid.}, 2 May, 1916.
were hungry, some faced unemployment, and the middle classes - who in the end would have to pay for a good deal of the damage - were bitterly resentful, as may be seen from the condemnation of the rising by the Dublin newspapers and from the clamour raised by one in particular - The Irish Independent which had some claim to represent the views of Catholic businessmen for condign punishment to be meted to the rebels. And as the leaders were marched off to prison to await court-martial, they were marched through crowds that were at least apathetic, at worst thoroughly hostile.125

Immediately following the rising the attribution of blame began in the Irish press. For the Redmondite press England, the familiar object of all blame for past Irish misfortunes, was now an unacceptable target. The Government had after all been following the advice of the Irish Parliamentary Party and yet the rising had occurred, there was indeed a brief moment, before reprisals began, where Ireland for once appeared to sympathize with England's plight. The blame for the rising could safely be attributed to the Orangemen. This indirectly came back to the Government since it was blamed for tolerating Orange threats, allowing them to hold up Home Rule and inviting the leaders of the movement into the Cabinet but it was not direct blame. On Monday, 1 May, the Cork Examiner announced the surrender of the insurgents in Dublin and said in its leading article:

The main question that must now occupy men's minds is the fate of the misguided men who have laid down their arms in Dublin. Is it necessary for us to repeat that with their conduct we have not the remotest sympathy. They have lived in and brooded over the past, and become desperate. We look forward to the

125 Ireland Since the Famine, op. cit., p. 375.
future and are still filled with hope. Many responsible people, consumed with horror at the tragic situation they have brought about, cry out for drastic measures. We emphatically protest against such a course. Ammesty in this case would not be generous. It would only be just. Remember the precedent that can be quoted in their defence. It is not more than a decade ago, in fact until the people of England made it clear that they were anxious for Ireland's friendship and co-operation, that the sentiments of our people changed. The really astonishing feature in the situation is not that the irreconciliables are so numerous, but that there are so few and so unrepresentative. Let us for a moment examine the precedent they can point to in justification of their position. Within a short year of the outbreak of the war, when all the noble lords and naval officers and generals in command, who were supporting the Carsonite rebellion in Ireland, believed (as we may for our own part say we never believed) that war with Germany in the immediate future was inevitable. Sir E. Carson was prepared to hand over Ulster to the Kaiser. Nay, he met him at a private lunch within his Empire, and shortly after induced those holding the chief military command in Ireland to hand in their swords. We stated at the time it was half bluff and all tomfoolery, but it was nevertheless high treason, and treason even at more critical time than the present. Now Germany is all but on her knees. The outbreak that took place in Ireland last week is not going to change the even tenor of the war. What is the choleric word in the North cannot be blasphemy in the South. Treason in Ulster cannot be punished by appointing its leaders to high legal office, while Dublin rebels are held strictly to account for their offences against the same statute. There is some truth in such a statement attributing to the Orange revolt against Home Rule and to the Government's response to it much of the blame for the existence of armed groups in Ireland, one of which was the base upon which the rising was engineered. Such statements would be repeated in many quarters throughout Ireland in months to come but the perception of affairs revealed by the Cork Examiner relied
on a considerable embellishment of Sir Edward Carson's relationship with the Kaiser which fundamentally distorted its nature. Furthermore the report that Germany was virtually on her knees would have astonished front line troops and even civilians exposed to the War Office's optimistic propaganda.

Father Walter McDonald later examined the kind of justification which rested on the argument that as Sir Edward Carson had rebelled and had not been punished the Dublin rebels should not be punished either and he wrote:

Then, as regards Sir Edward Carson; he, no doubt, threatened armed resistance but did not actually resist with arms. He did not, moreover, openly ally himself, in revolt, with an enemy at war with the Empire; the most powerful that ever attacked it; the Irish revolution being timed to synchronise with England's greatest peril. Above all, Sir E. Carson did not actually shoot down four or five hundred people, soldiers and civilians. Had he done all this, perhaps he, too, would have been shot, like Messrs. Pearse and Connolly.126

In the days immediately following the surrender of the rebels people expected them to be punished and had Irish juries been allowed to deal with their cases they would in all likelihood have punished them. The emphasis in the House of Commons and in the English press was on the fact that outside Dublin support for the insurgents had been negligible. Yet in the face of this popular sentiment martial law was extended to all Ireland, the work of ordinary courts was suspended and it became clear that the British army was in control in Ireland. Ireland was in fact to be treated as an occupied

126 Some Ethical Questions of Peace and War, op. cit., p. 154.
country. John Dillon, trapped in Dublin by the rising, was the only leader of the Irish Parliamentary Party in Ireland in the days following the surrender and he saw the danger in the situation which was developing. He attempted to restrain the military authorities which had in effect been loosed upon Ireland by a Government which in the House of Commons was not only recognizing the geographically limited extent of the rising but also likening it to the Sydney Street incident when a few years earlier a few armed gunmen had held British forces at bay in the heart of London. To drag in the army like a Juggernaut through all Ireland seemed extreme according to the Government's own reckoning of the situation. 127

The link between what occurred in Dublin at Easter and the formation of the Ulster Volunteers was firmly implanted in the Irish mind and made even more objectionable coercive measures directed exclusively at Southern nationalists but before these measures were taken Dr. Mangan, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Kerry, expressed a fairly widespread attitude as he even handedly condemned volunteering North and South for the Dublin insurrection and he sharply criticized Sir Roger Casement for espousing the German cause. 128

Already there was growing in Ireland a perception that the rebels even if wrong headed had after all been part of an ancient and, for many, an honourable tradition of Irish patriotism. These rebels were Irishmen who had acted out of love

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128 Cork Examiner, 2 May, 1916.
for their country, this could be said of them just as it could be said of John Redmond. After the initial shock at what these men had wrought wore off, there gradually emerged, as a part of Irish public opinion, the conviction that men who had been honestly mistaken ought not to be harshly punished. A leading article from the week following the rising expressed that perception quite clearly.

May we urge, therefore, that clemency is more likely to alienate any sympathy from these humiliated and beaten men than any drastic or severe course. Their minds have been warped, their judgment twisted, but most assuredly 999 out of every thousand acted on impulses that were not criminal. Clemency in their case we know, will not be misplaced, because frankly this is the first Irish rebellion throughout our history for which Irishmen need hang their heads in shame, because it is the first into which an element of treachery entered. These men doubtless, were utterly oblivious to the fact that their conduct was open to this construction, but in other hands that view will be widely accepted. For the first time our public men of all shades were loud in their professions of sympathy and good feeling with England and her aims. She had every reason to believe that our people were one with her in sentiment on the question of the war, as we all know they were save for a very small and insignificant number.129

When this was written the fate of the Irish prisoners was not known and inevitably there were conflicting rumours concerning their cases. The military authorities, headed by Major-General Sir John Maxwell, did not see the Irish Parliamentary Party's assurances of the impossibility of rebellion as mitigating a pro-German stab in the back by British subjects

129Cork Examiner, 4 May, 1916.
who had in any case been making scurrilous attacks on the army for some time before the rising. The military, pre-eminently conscious of the war with Germany, inevitably saw the Dublin uprising as part of the German war effort. In this belief they were encouraged by the rebels' Proclamation itself. In Ireland it seems clear that nationalist opinion never shared that perception whatever view of the rising itself it may have had. The military's point of view was transmitted to England and reinforced by journalists who used the same terms to describe the rising which they used to report the actions of the Huns on the Western front. 130

At one moment it seemed as if the Irish rebels would be treated with the same leniency that the British Government had displayed towards the Boer rebels in South Africa and the Cork Examiner printed a report from London that MacDermott, Plunkett and Ceannt had been sentenced to three years at penal servitude. 131 In Dublin, however, it was known that executions had taken place and the Freeman's Journal, which resumed publication on the 5th May, quickly adopted an indignant stance when contrasting the punishment meted out to Dublin rebels when Ulster rebels had suffered none. The nationalist press in general also resented the demands of the unionist press and of the Irish Times in particular for severe measures against the insurgents. The Freeman's Journal declared that

131 5 May, 1916.
"the ironical indecency of their present frenzy in face of what has come in Ireland largely because of their own encouragement of lawlessness and sedition, is staggering". 132

The letter of the Church of Ireland Archbishop of Dublin, written on the Wednesday following the surrender of the insurgents illustrates the gulf between nationalist and unionist which, despite their joint support of the British war effort, the rising had uncovered. Dr. Bernard wrote:

A disquieting rumour is prevalent here that the officials at Dublin Castle are anxious to dispense with martial law, and to take up the reins of government again at an early date. I desire to say two things.

First, martial law is the only security for life and property at present in the city of Dublin. The danger, which has been much greater than the government will admit, is by no means past. If the Prime Minister thinks otherwise, he is as badly informed as he was when he told the House of Commons that the rebels had no machine guns. Many armed rebels are at large in Dublin still, and the danger of another rising can only be averted by the adoption of the sternest measures. As I write there are snipers on the roofs trying to shoot any officers that they may see. This is not the time for amnesties and pardons; it is the time for punishment, swift and stern. And no one who lives in Ireland believes that the present Government has the courage to punish anybody.

Secondly, in place of Mr. Birrell we ask that we shall be sent a man, who will reside in the country which he is paid to rule, and a Secretary of State who will do his best, without fear or favour, to help and not hinder the police. 133

This letter reveals the terror which unionists felt following the rebellion and the Archbishop was no doubt quite convinced that the rebels had been armed with machine guns. Unionists

132 6 May, 1916.
133 Freeman's Journal, 8 May, 1916.
were badly frightened and they also felt betrayed by the Government. On numerous occasions they had warned the Castle of the danger to peace presented by the Irish Volunteers only to be rebuffed by the benign insouciance of Augustine Birrell. Now that their apprehensions had been realized they saw the possibility of their fears being set at rest by a resolute military administration of Ireland which would crush all pockets of potential resistance.

The widespread arrests of Sinn Fein supporters and suspected supporters seemed for a time to indicate that this was to be the Government's policy even though these measures seemed to conflict with Government declarations in the House of Commons. But if this policy gave any comfort to unionists and reconciled them to the Government such was not its effect on nationalists. Civic bodies began to pass resolutions condemning the rising still, but reiterating confidence in John Redmond rather than professing loyalty to the Crown as the first of these resolutions had done. Wexford Corporation, the New Ross Board of Guardians, Mayo County Council, Castlebar District Council, Castlebar Urban Council, the Castlerea Board of Guardians, the Carrickmacross Board of Guardians, Manorhamilton District Council, Cork County Council, Kinsale Urban Council, Macroom District Council, Galway County Council, Limerick County Council and many others condemned the Dublin rising and gave their fullest assurances of support to Redmond and a few of them joined to their condemnation a plea for
leniency towards the insurgents.\textsuperscript{134}

It is worth noting that few Roman Catholic prelates followed Dr. Mangan in condemning the rising as such. The strongest condemnation from a Roman Catholic bishop came from Dr. Kelly, the Bishop of Ross, who declared that unjustifiable war had been waged in Ireland:

... it was war made in Ireland by Irishmen themselves, and the lives lost were those of their own people, slaughtered in a senseless, meaningless debauchery of blood. For though in warfare - legitimate warfare - the taking of human life was justifiable and free from the taint of homicide, in war not lawful every life taken was murder pure and simple with all its dreadful moral consequences. Now he could not see any justification for the war in Dublin. It could not, in his judgment, be justified on any pretext, though there were people, perhaps, who would try to find an excuse for it. He did not see any. It was needless, wanton, terrible, and on those to blame for it was the guilt of murder.

He went on to point out that Ireland had so far been spared much of the increased taxation which had been imposed on England and Scotland but that such relative advantages could not now be expected to continue. He even welcomed martial law as salutary and declared that:

They would have a needed lesson in obedience, and people would perhaps learn that everyone could not do exactly as he thought fit, which seemed to have become the general idea lately among us. If they did not submit it was the business of the soldier or policeman to use his baton, and if that did not do to use his revolver.\textsuperscript{135}

Dr. Harty, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Cashel and Emly,

\textsuperscript{134}\textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{135}\textit{Cork Examiner, 8 May, 1916.}
condemned the rising as well as all non-constitutional methods and he praised the people of Tipperary for not allowing themselves "to get mixed up in anything that was against the interests of the country". The Roman Catholic Bishop of Clonfert specifically rejected the argument that rebellion in Ulster in any way justified what had occurred in Dublin. This line of thinking ran counter to the tradition in Irish political culture, which was annually revived at Bodenstown and at Manchester Martyrs' commemorations, that to strike at England was something essentially patriotic and praiseworthy. Despite the pronouncements of this handful of bishops and of the leaders of the Irish Parliamentary Party it was difficult, given that tradition, to look upon the latest strikers of such a blow as traitors, particularly when their actions brought about much the same reactions from Britain as had the efforts of previous Irish heroes. The English had always been viewed as stereotyped in one of two ways by Irish nationalists: the history text published and used by the Christian Brothers in 1916 pictured them either as bestial tyrants when they won or as poltroons when they lost and it was difficult for many of the Irish people to share John Redmond's vision of the new relationship between the two countries especially after martial law had been imposed over the entire country which on the whole had done no more than support Redmond

137 Ibid.
and demonstrate its loyalty. 138

That the rebellion had occurred and that it had been
destructive of life and property could hardly be denied but
it was soon apparent to the leaders of the Irish Parliamentary
Party that the socialization process of generations which had
transmitted hatred of England as a positive value could not
be reversed quickly, particularly when Home Rule was constantly
being postponed. If the Irish Party unreservedly condemned
the rebellion as had been Redmond's initial reaction they would
be running counter to deeply ingrained values and prejudices
in Ireland. John Dillon who had observed the rising at close
hand and then heard of the early reprisals and seen their effect
on public opinion understood this very well. Yet the Irish
Party did feel betrayed by the rising and the leadership was
also aware that, taking into account the prevailing English
attitude, any defence of the rebels jeopardized the influence
the Party still had on the Government and exposed it to
charges of betraying all their assurances given since August
1914. The safest course was that adopted by the Freeman's
Journal of deploring the rebellion itself as a threat to
the accomplishments of the Party and to shift the blame onto
Sir Edward Carson. There was just enough truth in this to
make it convincing to much of Irish opinion.

On 8 May, the Freeman's Journal published a leading
article under the heading "The True Causes of the Sinn Fein

138 The Christian Brothers, Irish History Reader, (M. H. Gill and Son Ltd., Dublin, 1916), passim.
Insurrection" in which it said:

In our issue of Saturday we drew attention to the fact that the root cause of the Sinn Fein Insurrection and of Dublin's week of horrors is to be found in Sir Edward Carson's campaign in Ulster. The formation of a body of Volunteers in that Province for the avowed purpose of armed resistance to the law; the deliberate use of the threat of armed rebellion as a menace to the King and Parliament and as a means of obtaining political objects; the weakness of the Executive Government in cowering before these threats, and in treating Privy Councillors, Peers, members of Parliament and magistrates who gloried in threats of treason and rebellion with consideration and deference; the Curragh mutiny, and, finally, the formation of the Coalition Government and the promotion to high Executive and Legal Office in the Government of the Ulster leaders who had just been engaged in organizing rebellion and glorying in armed defiance of the law and the legislature; these were the prime causes which led up to the terrible events of the past fortnight.\textsuperscript{139}

One is left wondering if this is the same newspaper which warmly endorsed the take-over of the Volunteers by Redmond. In this way, however, guilt could be diverted to the unionists, a safe target from the Party's point of view. John Dillon had already alerted Redmond to the effects of the executions and of the arrests which were taking place in Ireland and he advised that "there is no choice for us but to attack the Government or else abandon the field".\textsuperscript{140} For Redmond to move to the attack against the Government was difficult, he was far more committed to the support of the British war effort than Dillon and he had borne the brunt of urging Birrell to resist the advice of unionists, military officers and civil servants that the Irish Volunteers be disarmed before they resorted to

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{139}8 May, 1916.}\\\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{140}Quoted from a letter written on the 3rd May in Denis Gwynn, The Life of John Redmond, op. cit., p. 486.}
overt violence. Redmond had believed and had pressed his belief that the Irish Volunteers were no threat. Under these circumstances he felt himself under a greater personal commitment to the Government than did Dillon.

If a future course of action was unclear for the leaders of the Irish Party so was it for the Cabinet. The Prime Minister and a significant proportion of the Cabinet were the same Liberals who had pushed the Home Rule Act through Parliament against very determined opposition from Unionists some of whom now shared with them seats on the front bench. The rebellion had come as a shock to the Cabinet despite the intelligence reports and the growing apprehensions of Lord Wimborne. Lord Wimborne immediately prior to the rising had finally convinced Sir Matthew Nathan that the Irish Volunteers were a real threat and Augustine Birrell had reluctantly decided that action would have to be taken against them. The rebellion was bound to be seen by Unionists in the Cabinet as a vindication of their position just as it proved a serious embarrassment to the Home Rulers, but it did draw the Cabinet together on the question of conscription over which the Prime Minister had been encountering some difficulty. There was no unanimity, however, on the question of an appropriate reaction to the events of Easter. The first step - to proclaim martial law - was obvious, at least until the rebellion was put down. The question of what to do then remained, and the Government for the moment left that decision largely in the hands of the
military commander who had been sent over to crush the rising. As has recently been pointed out:

British statesmen and military men were not in the habit of thinking of Ireland in the light of the workings of past history. General Maxwell, with only the Government's incomplete and over-simplified knowledge of the background to the rebellion at his disposal, saw it primarily as a German manoeuvre in the Great War which was at that moment going badly for England. Quite incorrectly, but sincerely, he thought that the Germans had inspired the rebellion and that what seemed like Casement's attempt to land with German arms to lead it was the cornerstone of the enterprise. After all, the Republican Proclamation which Pearse had read out to such an apathetic audience from the front of the Post Office had actually mentioned with pride support from the Germans as "gallant allies in Europe".141

General Maxwell began by ordering the trial by courts-martial of the leading figures in the rebellion. In fact only one hundred seventy-one people were tried by courts-martial and of the 3,509 people arrested almost half were released, the remainder being sent to Britain for internment.142 On superficial examination this seems to be extremely lenient treatment of rebels following a determined uprising. In fact a number of observers have concluded that General Maxwell did behave leniently particularly when his behaviour is contrasted to that of other suppressors of rebellions. As Arland Ussher commented: "when we think of Thier's monstrous vengeance after the Paris Commune, or the Bartholemew nights of Nazi Germany - or even the suppression of the Indian Mutiny -

we cannot fairly accuse the British of great severity or vindictiveness on this occasion". However the very fact that arrests were carried out all over the country by the military while the politicians at Westminster were emphasizing that there had been no unrest outside the Dublin area and that the bulk of the population had remained loyal was upsetting and created a feeling of relative deprivation in Ireland. The execution of only fifteen of the ninety who had been condemned to death also testifies to leniency but the way convictions were obtained and the manner of carrying out the sentences also smacked of special treatment for the Irish. It has been observed of the leaders that:

They were not brought to open trial on the charge of high treason or on any other charge: The authorities who carried out the sentences were those who passed judgment upon their guilt and the only people who ever heard or saw the evidence upon which the judgment was passed. They were shot in batches: for days the lesson was hammered home in stroke after stroke that these men were entitled neither to open trial and proof of their guilt before execution, nor to the treatment of captured enemies. The conclusion drawn by Nationalist Ireland was that if they had been Englishmen they would have been tried by English courts and sentenced by the judgment of their countrymen: that if they had been Germans or Turks they would have been treated as prisoners of war: but that being Irishmen they were in a class apart, members of a subject race, the mere property of a court-martial.

The length of time taken over the executions may have been due, as a unionist commentator argued, to "the careful legal impartiality, so dear to the British" but the suspense

143 The Face and Mind of Ireland, op. cit., p. 21. See also Katherine Chorley, Armies and the Art of Revolution, op. cit. pp. 43-44.
145 Nora Robertson, Crowned Harp, op. cit., p. 135.
of awaiting the fate of each and their identity and condition was ennervating in an already tense climate when the Irish majority felt itself punished for remaining loyal by the abrogation of Irish civil law. There were obvious reasons for the reluctance of the authorities to trust Irish juries but no attempt was made to justify to Irish public opinion the actions of the military. The execution of Joseph Plunkett, who was known to be dying and that of James Connolly, who was so grievously wounded that he had to be tied into a chair to face the execution squad was impossible to justify in Irish eyes as was the execution of men like Willie Pearse. In his case Owen Dudley Edwards has observed that:

...oddly enough the only person whom we know to have become his own executioner by deluding the British was Willie Pearse, brother of Patrick. Willie, almost certainly innocent of everything save taking part in the actual fighting, claimed at his court martial to have masterminded the whole insurrection. The British took him at his word and shot him, thereby creating a wave of sympathy for what seemed the vindictive slaughter of a man whose only crime was to be Patrick Pearse's brother, and who - as all Dublin knew - would never have been made a party to the critical planning. Sympathy might have been curtailed had the British executed the Patrick Pearses of the rising; it was killing the Willie Pearses that appeared as brutal, vengeful and wanton slaughter, and hence created the national mentality which would vote Sinn Fein in 1918, and would provide the cover for Collin's guerillas which every guerilla army must have if it wishes to survive. 146

It is likely that even a higher number of executions swiftly carried out immediately after the rising would have been accepted as just retribution had these not been accompanied

146 _Celtic Nationalism_, op. cit., p. 206.
by arrests and the suspension of ordinary law throughout Ireland. It is because of the manner in which they were carried out that the Irish saw in the fifteen executions nothing but cold blooded savagery. It seems true to say that:

Maxwell's blunder lay not so much in his authorization of the executions as in his dilatory handling of the courts-martial. Ireland was gravely disturbed. In addition to those who were known to have taken part in the Rising, hundreds of other Sinn Feiners were being rounded up for deportation to detention centres in England. It would have been wise to get the executions over as quickly as possible and allow the country to settle down again. But Maxwell kept up the tension by trying two or three leaders at a time and then issuing brief announcements of the sentences and the shooting of those whose sentences had been confirmed. 147

The actions of General Maxwell seemed to lend to Patrick Pearse's inflated rhetoric about English tyranny a retroactive justification and his propaganda of hate for England a new relevance. The rising and the British reaction ensured that the I.R.B. propaganda, which had fallen largely on deaf ears, should now be heard. Ernst Cassirer observed that "the skilful use of the magic words is not all. If the word is to have its full effect it has to be supplemented by the introduction of new rites". 148 These new rites were not only the blood sacrifice of the rising itself but the necrolatry surrounding the executed leaders which now developed as a form of protest.

147Edgar Holt, Protest in Arms, op.cit., p. 119.
out allowed opposition to organize and Irish newspapers daily printed appeals for their cessations, similar pleas were made in British papers, particularly those which were closely identified with the Liberal Party. On 10 May, the Cork Examiner, in a lengthy leading article, expressed the feelings which had developed since the rising:

The Dublin disturbances still absorb the mind of Ireland. The dreadful occurrences in the capital, at a moment when war in all countries is the order of the day, are lost in the terrible aftermath that has involved the shootings and the sentencing of prisoners. While these have been imposed on a great number, no inkling has been given to the public of the degree of guilt of the parties involved, nor have the charges against them been indicated in the slightest manner. The bald announcement is merely put forward, leaving imagination and many-tongued rumour to formulate the accusations against the unhappy men who have been condemned to death in the devastated city of Dublin. Everything now is quiet throughout the country, and the stillness of death apparently hangs over our much-tried capital. Is it not time, therefore, that the putting into effect of the extreme penalty should cease, and that some effort was made in the future that the accused should be tried under circumstances which would provide that some idea of the accusations and the gravity of charges of those involved should be judged by the public? It is very widely believed that on a very small circle indeed the responsibility for this terrible occurrence rests. The story goes that a very large proportion of the men who took part in the fighting against the troops were not cognisant that they would be called on at any time to take the offensive against armed and disciplined forces: that through no deep-laid designs on their part did they find themselves confronting the forces of the Crown, and the fact that they were connected with these mad happenings was rather the outcome of a sudden impulse than the result of a widespread plot. Under the circumstances we think it would have a very reassuring effect, especially now that everything is quiet, if an authoritative statement was made that further punishment would only be imposed after a public trial.
The men, too, arrested throughout the country, who in the vast majority of cases must be innocent of evil design, should be brought speedily before a tribunal open to the public if a shadow of the case against them can be made, or liberated if as must be the case in a great many instances, no charge can be laid at their doors. In this period of exasperation and excitement, it is the business of the community to try as far as possible to forget what has occurred, and to allay the passions that have been aroused upon all sides.

The military had been given a free hand and, insensitive to all the pressures which had been built up by the expectation of Home Rule and by its growing unreality for most Irishmen, they proceeded to attempt to accomplish what they had long urged the civil authorities to do - destroy the Irish Volunteers and the whole separatist movement. This was bound to generate widespread resentment and as time went on public bodies expressing their confidence in John Redmond and their condemnation of the rising joined to these expressions demands for an end to executions and to the continuation of martial law.

Nationalist Ireland also bristled at the Unionist efforts to bring conscription into effect in Ireland as a mass punishment for the rising. This move, proposed formally in the House of Commons by Sir John Lonsdale and supported by Sir Edward Carson, was rejected by the Prime Minister. Mr. Asquith began at this stage the series of actions which it has been said "inevitably made the situation worse, even those which in themselves were right". He announced that he hoped

that the executions were over thus undermining the authority of General Maxwell but without formally issuing new directives. This naturally raised expectations that blood had ceased to flow in Ireland and the Irish Parliamentary Party issued a manifesto calling for an end to the executions and for the immediate withdrawal of martial law. For some years now the Irish people had grown accustomed to such formal demands of the Party being met in large measure by the Liberal Government. In this case not only was no move made to end martial law but the executions continued thus damaging the prestige of the Irish Party. Had John Dillon been in London a firm protest might have been made but in his absence the rebuff was suffered in silence.

The Cork Harbour Board while condemning the rising expressed concern that Irishmen were not being trusted to enforce law and order in their own country and a protest telegram was sent to the Lord Lieutenant, the Prime Minister and John Redmond by the Lord Mayor of Cork, the Roman Catholic Assistant Bishop of Cork and a number of prominent citizens of that city declaring that:

Voicing, we believe, the opinion of the great majority of the citizens of Cork, we desire to protest most strongly against any further shootings as the result of court-martial trials, and against indiscriminate arrests throughout the country. We are strongly of opinion that such shootings and arrests are having a most injurious effect on the feelings of the Irish people, and if persisted in may be extremely prejudicial to the peace and future harmony of Ireland, and seriously imperil the future relations between Ireland and England.152

152 Freeman's Journal, 12 May, 1916.
The Cork County Council which had been so prompt to express its continued loyalty to the Crown also protested in a strong resolution which called for an end to the executions and which said in part:

We are satisfied that the military officers have always been prejudiced against the Irish people, as shown by the conduct of General Gough and others comparatively recently at the Curragh. We believe the outbreak was caused by the unjust and one-sided way in which the law was administered in Ireland, Sir Edward Carson and his followers being allowed to land arms, to drill, hold reviews, parade Belfast with machine guns, give and take the Royal salute, and repeatedly declare their intention of calling in a foreign power rather than submit to Home Rule, even though it had been granted by Parliament. Since that Sir Edward Carson received a seat in the Cabinet. On the other hand when Nationalists attempted to land arms at Howth, the military were called out in an illegal manner, and Dublin men and women were shot down; in one instance several witnesses swore that a woman named Duffy was shot down by an officer named Cobden, but Cobden was never put on trial. We ask that courts-martial be abolished, that trial in open court before three judges be substituted. That an Arms Act be enforced over all Ireland. We ask that those who rule us remember that torrents of Irish blood have been spilt in Belgium, the Dardanelles and France for England, and by treating with leniency all concerned in the recent outbreak, help to restore the good feeling which was coming into existence between our country and England.\footnote{Cork Examiner, 12 May, 1916.}

The Fermoy Urban Council also passed a resolution blaming English misrule for the rising and more specifically attributing it to the failure to implement Home Rule.\footnote{Ibid.} What is worth noting here is that blame was being shifted away from the Ulster unionists back upon England, an attribution far more in conformity with traditional Irish thinking.
John Dillon who finally reached London in a state of high excitement intervened in the House of Commons with a speech in which he defended the insurgents against the attacks made upon their integrity and their motives both in the press and in Parliament. He stressed the loyalty of most of the country and revealed the murder of Francis Sheehy-Skeffington. In retrospect it can be seen that this speech released a flood of sympathy for the rebels on the part of Irish Party supporters. The speech ultimately proved destructive of Party support but had Party representations been acted upon in the following months or even if the Party could have claimed credit for putting an end to the executions, Dillon's speech might have redounded to its advantage but the Prime Minister, who was then on the eve of a visit to Dublin, announced that two more executions were still to come. Dillon's speech shocked and offended many in the House of Commons and it confirmed the Unionist belief in the fundamental disloyalty of the Irish Parliamentary Party despite Dillon's claim that the rebellion was directed as much against the Irish Party as against British Rule.

The Earl of Midleton, leader of the southern unionists, commented on the Prime Minister's decision to visit Ireland at this juncture, saying:

Asquith opened the ball by a blunder of the first magnitude. Having appointed General

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156 See the police reports contained in Breandan MacGiolla Choille, ed., *Intelligence Notes 1913-16*, op. cit., pp. 200 ff.
Maxwell to restore order and establish a military tribunal to try the gratuitous murder which darkened the Easter of 1916, he stopped the executions and made confusion worse confounded by rushing over to Ireland, declaring Castle rule had broken down, and interviewing those responsible for the murders.157

The Prime Minister's visit suggested that the rebellion had been politically more important and more successful than had hitherto been thought, an impression which was confirmed and reinforced by his report on the visit to the House of Commons. Before that report was made, however, John Dillon's speech had led in Ireland to a public revision of the character of the rebels even if not of the insurrection itself. Newspapers like the Freeman's Journal even as they continued to deplore the "mistaken" views which had led to rebellion also began to emphasize the valour and courtesy of the rebels.158

The Roman Catholic Bishop of Killaloe took up much the same position though he made a clear identification of "Irishmen" with Roman Catholic Home Rulers discriminated against by Sir Edward Carson and by the new Attorney-General for Ireland, Mr. J. H. Campbell, whose appointment he described as an "unbearable scandal".159

The more favourable climate for Sinn Fein separatists which followed upon these events restored their self-confidence and, having been exonerated in the public mind from moral guilt by the Irish Parliamentary Party's defense, they resumed their


158 See for example the leading article of 16 May, 1916.

159 Cork Examiner, 17 May, 1916.
propaganda onslaught on both the Party and the British Government. Stormy sessions in the Cork Corporation following this renewed offensive presaged what was later to take place in other public bodies as tensions failed to be significantly reduced by the Government and as the impotence of the Irish Party revealed itself ever more clearly. The Irish Party was in some difficulty and John Redmond, faced with the alternative of either moving into decided opposition to the Government and thus disarming criticism from the separatist wing of nationalist opinion or continuing in broad support of the Government and attacking his separatist critics in the hope of winning some advantage from this show of loyalty which would restore his fortunes at home, chose the latter course. His counter attack took the form of a message to the Irish in America in which he declared that:

The attempt to torpedo Home Rule and the Irish Party has failed. Damage has been done, life has been lost, but the ship had not been sunk. The whole thing has been organized by those in Ireland and America who have always been the open and irreconcilable enemies of Home Rule and the Irish Party.

Though the hand of Germany was in the whole thing, it was not so much sympathy for Germany as hatred of Home Rule and of us which was at the bottom of the movement. It was even more an attempt to hit us than to hit England....

I am convinced that many old opponents of Home Rule will be profoundly impressed by these events, and will come to the same conclusions as Irish Nationalists reached long ago - that the only security for good order, as well as good government, in Ireland is a native Executive and Parliament, backed by Irish opinion, and that if such an

160 Ibid., 13 May, 1916.
Executive had been in existence for the last six months there would have been no Dublin riot.\textsuperscript{161}

In the short term Redmond was right and the Home Rule cause was revitalized but his hold on Irish public opinion had been severely weakened and he desperately needed a victory to restore it. Until such a victory was won he had to follow a public opinion which he no longer could control as he had in the past. This new inexperienced and intransigent opinion generated unrealistic expectations concerning what could be won from the British Government through continued reliance on constitutional methods.

The Southern unionists had been thoroughly alarmed by the rebellion and the improving relations which had been evident between them and the Redmondites were shattered by the uprising which the latter had declared impossible and by the growing sympathy for the rebels manifested by prominent figures in the Party. Professor Mahaffy, now Provost of Trinity College, had behaved remarkably coolly during the rising; declaring J. H. Campbell re-elected as a Member of Parliament for the College and conducting junior sophister examinations in the dining hall on Easter Tuesday.\textsuperscript{162} Now he was stung to the quick by John Dillon's defence of the character of the rebels. With an equal claim to having observed the rebellion at close quarters, he wrote a letter to the Times in which he attacked

\textsuperscript{161}Freeman's Journal, 18 May, 1916.

\textsuperscript{162}W. B. Stanford and R. B. McDowell, Mahaffy, op. cit., p. 231.
the accounts of what had occurred in Dublin given by Dillon and by the Prime Minister. In this regard it is worth bearing in mind that Mahaffy was one of those Southern unionists who had moved towards a closer rapport with the Redmondites at the outbreak of the war. Now he virtually accused Dillon of lying to Parliament, of describing a campaign of "ambuscades, snipings and plunderings", "a mean and cowardly fight" as if it had been a "good, clean fight" and he went on to say:

It is quite a mistake to imagine "that nine out of every 10 people in Ireland are on the side of the law", as the Prime Minister said in his speech. There has been throughout the National schools a propaganda of hatred to England on the part of school masters living on the pay of the Imperial Government. A great many of the G.P.O. officials actually joined in the rebellion. The rising generation have been so carefully soaked in disloyal sentiments that the large majority of the population is now against Imperial law and order. That is the poison which a strong and honest Government must counteract by a stern policy. 163

His charges against the National schools would be hotly contested and they were no doubt exaggerated and ideologically distorted but there is evidence that at least a significant number of school masters were imbued with the separatist spirit and that while all that they claimed to be teaching was love for all things Irish this could all too often mean simply hatred for all things English. The charge against the employees of the G.P.O., however, was beyond dispute.

The unionists were further enraged by conclusions such as

that reached by the Freeman's Journal on the basis of the evidence presented to the Royal Commission on the Rebellion, that the grant of Home Rule would have averted the insurrection. This, while plausible, was to ignore the probable consequences of unionist opposition and to continue the singular delusion that such opposition was all bluff. ¹⁶⁴

The Independent newspapers representing the opinion of the merchants who had suffered most from the physical damage resulting from the rebellion continued to be less benevolent towards the rebels than other organs of nationalist opinion. Even after the execution of Connolly had removed their most determined opponent from the scene they continued to favour the punishment of active rebels, however, they also denounced as a "mistake and a blunder" the wholesale arrests being carried out through the entire country, even in districts which had remained conspicuously loyal. ¹⁶⁵ The effect of these arrests has been described by Piaras Beaslai as a major factor in altering the attitudes of many Irish men and women to one of open sympathy with the extremists. ¹⁶⁶

A further source of discontent in Dublin at this time was the question of compensation for the disruption of the economic life of the city caused by the rising. The Irish Trades Union Congress and Labour Party, meeting shortly after the surrender, demanded compensation from the Government for the lives and property lost in the rising as well as for the release of

¹⁶⁴ 20 May, 1916.
¹⁶⁵ See for example Irish Weekly Independent, 20 May, 1916.
trade union officials arrested following the rebellion. A few days later the Freeman's Journal commented on the high level of dissatisfaction prevailing in Dublin over the inadequacy of the grants being awarded by the British Government to those commercial firms whose premises and property had been destroyed in the insurrection. The sense of outrage being felt by the commercial middle class was due to the fact that the Government in determining the amount of the indemnity payable in each case had based its calculation on the amount of insurance cover carried by each firm and the owners were now sharply revising the value they attached to their premises. A meeting of proprietors held in Dublin called upon John Redmond and the Irish Parliamentary Party to demand from the Prime Minister the upward revaluation of the indemnities.

One development of late May which was to have far-reaching consequences emerged out of the Prime Minister's visit to Dublin in the aftermath of the rising. The visit had initially provided a certain utilitarian justification for the events of Easter week. Ireland which had been largely ignored since the outbreak of the war now warranted a prime ministerial visit. Prisoners taken during the week were thoughtfully interviewed by Mr. Asquith who thus conferred upon their actions a greater significance than many would otherwise have attached to them. Now the Prime Minister in his report to the House of Commons

167 Freeman's Journal, 22 May, 1916.
on his visit raised the expectations of Home Rule in Ireland to a higher level than they had been since 1913. This gave rise to the conviction that the rebels, even if wrong headed, had managed more for Home Rule in a week than the Irish Party's loyal and careful constitutionalism had managed in years. The Prime Minister's declaration that Castle rule had broken down clearly implied that a new structure of government for Ireland was to be introduced, and Lloyd George, the dominant figure in the Cabinet, was directed to find a solution to the creation "at the earliest possible moment of an Irish government responsible to the Irish people". This inevitably raised hopes in Ireland among Home Rulers and made it very difficult for them to maintain a hostile attitude towards the rebels at a time when the executions and the daily publication of lists of deportees had already significantly increased sympathy for the rebels and hostility towards the British authorities. The fears of government by commission which had been expressed before the Prime Minister's announcement gave way to relief and to the expectation that martial law was about to be lifted. But the continuation of martial law and arrests by the military authorities coupled with the visit of Mr. Asquith and his statement in the House of Commons soon conveyed the image of a vacillating Government unsure of what course to follow. That ambivalence towards Irish rebels would continue until the dissolution of the Union and contribute

in large measure to separatist success. As one commentator has observed concerning the actions of the British Government at this time:

It was once more England's fatal vacillation. Had she executed every man and woman of the insurgents and loosed the heavy hand in the island, she might have smothered Irish rebellion for a generation. Had she pardoned them, Ireland in the mass would have forgotten the Rising within the year. She fell between the two stools of severity and indulgence.\footnote{Shaw Desmond, \textit{The Drama of Sinn Fein}, op. cit., p. 178.}

The Government found that it could not ignore the fact that the Dublin rising had been a murderous stab in the back at a moment of great difficulty but the Liberal members of the Coalition could not completely escape responsibility for creating the conditions in which a small rising could be as devastating as this one had been.

Among unionists the Prime Minister's statement was greeted with dismay and a sense of betrayal. One unionist has left a record of the feelings of Southern unionists following the rising and pointed out that:

Some influential people, interested in recruiting, were of opinion that conscription might even safely be put into force, and that many of those who had been implicated in the rebellion would have found in it a means of escape from the Nemesis which might follow the unholy alliance with the Germans. It was argued that many had joined Sinn Fein for the purpose of escaping conscription, and if the results of the Sinn Fein movement had been to let them in for the very thing they had sought to avoid, Sinn Fein might have been finally discredited. Some also believed that English opinion was so savage at the rebellion and at the German alliance, that the Cabinet would announce that the Home Rule Act would be given to Ireland when it was believed that the people would accept it in a friendly spirit; but
that as they had proved rebellious and hostile to England, the measure would be hung up until they showed that they could be trusted to govern themselves without seeking the disruption of the Empire. 172

Instead of this the Government was seen as acting to reward treason by granting the measure which had been refused when coupled with expressions of loyalty. While unionists had never been disposed to place much value on these loyal protestations their sense of betrayal was none the less strong. They had been truly loyal in support of the war effort and had sent to the front a higher proportion of their total population than had nationalist Ireland and even without the rebellion most of them would have seen the ultimate rejection of Home Rule as a just reward for their superior exertions and a fitting retribution for the lukewarm support of the nationalists. Now the very reverse was being proposed and the outrage felt by unionists at this manoeuvre would significantly affect the likelihood of discovering a solution to the Home Rule dilemma during the war by raising even higher the barrier of Ulster intransigence. 173 Asquith had once again underestimated the strength and determination of unionists who were prepared to break up the Coalition in the middle of the war if necessary to defeat the odious measure as well as the devotion to the ideal of a united Ireland on the part of Home Rulers which would lead them to reject compromise on the basis of territory.

172 Sir Henry Robinson, Memories: Wise and Otherwise, op. cit., pp. 244-245.
Towards the end of May the extremist cause received encouragement from a new source. The Roman Catholic hierarchy had on the whole remained silent about the rising and what little public comment there had been had condemned the enterprise. In late May, Dr. Higgins, the Roman Catholic Auxilliary Bishop of Galway had described the rising as insanity.\textsuperscript{174} Insanity was becoming a popular explanation of the rising in Roman Catholic official circles and a few days after Dr. Higgin's condemnation the \textit{Irish Catholic} attributed the insurrection specifically to Patrick Pearse's "ill-balanced mind" though it also cast doubt on the sanity of all those who followed that "crazy and insolent schoolmaster".\textsuperscript{175} However, a sharply conflicting hierarchical attitude emerged with the publication of the correspondence exchanged between General Maxwell and Dr. O'Dwyer, the Bishop of Limerick. The General, aware of the involvement of many priests in the Irish Volunteers and in support of separatist activity generally, had written to the Bishop asking him to discipline two of the priests of his diocese who had been most open in their support for the extremists. Dr. O'Dwyer, whose sentiments towards England and towards English rule in Ireland were well known, not only refused to take action against the two priests but also proceeded to censure the British Government and sent the whole correspondence to the newspapers. In his reply to General Maxwell, Dr. O'Dwyer declared:

\textsuperscript{174}\textit{Freeman's Journal}, 27 May, 1916.

\textsuperscript{175}29 May, 1916.
In your letter of 6th inst., you appeal to me to help you in the furtherance of your work as military dictator of Ireland. Even if action of that kind was not outside my province, the events of the past few weeks would make it impossible for me to have any part in proceedings which I regard as wantonly cruel and oppressive... You took care that no plea for mercy should interpose on behalf of the poor young fellows who surrendered to you in Dublin. The first information which we got of their fate was the announcement that they had been shot in cold blood. Personally I regard your action with horror, and I believe that it has outraged the conscience of the country. Then the deporting of hundreds, and even thousands, of poor fellows without a trial of any kind seems to me an abuse of power, as fatuous as it is arbitrary, and altogether your regime has been one of the worst and blackest chapters in the history of the misgovernment of this country.176

The Bishop's words coming from a respected prelate of the Roman Catholic Church removed another barrier to open popular sympathy with the rebels and just as Pearse had found it impossible to maintain an effective distinction between hatred of English rule in Ireland and hatred of England so those who sympathized with the personal plight of the rebels would be unable to withhold sympathy for rebel aims even if they had been ardent Home Rulers.

The Limerick Board of Guardians voted its support of Dr. O'Dwyer's reply to General Maxwell177 and he replied thanking them for their support and adding that:

"It would be a sorry day for the Church in Ireland if her Bishops took their orders from agents of the British Government. As to the poor fellows who have given themselves for Ireland, no one will venture to question the purity and nobility of their motives or the splendour of their courage. But many blame them...

177Cork Examiner, 1 June, 1916."
for attempting a hopeless enterprise. Yet we cannot help noticing that since Easter Monday Home Rule has come with a bound into the sphere of practical politics, although Mr. Asquith and his Government, with suspicious inconsistency are shooting and imprisoning the men who galvanized them into action.\textsuperscript{178}

This can be seen as evidence that the vacillations of the British Government were already creating difficulties. Meanwhile, in the House of Commons, John Dillon was making much the same point as he castigated the Government for its indiscriminate arrests of men who had taken no part in the rising or who "were called out for one of these promenades on the mountains, which were allowed by the Government, and to which no taint of illegality fixed itself" and who then found themselves in the midst of an insurrection. By these arrests, deportations and detentions the Government was "manufacturing Sinn Feiners, or at all events enemies of the Government by the thousands".\textsuperscript{179} The Cork County Council also passed a resolution which condemned the detention without trial of large numbers of Irishmen. The resolution read:

\begin{quote}
That, in the opinion of this council, the great bulk of the men arrested on suspicion, and detained in the military detention camp at Wakefield, are guiltless of any participation in the recent rebellion, and, pending the investigation of their cases are entitled to the rights of innocent men; and that we call on the Irish representatives to investigate the conditions under which the prisoners are being detained, with a view to improving those which appear to be unjustly harsh.\textsuperscript{180}
\end{quote}

On the same day the Dublin County Council called for the setting

\textsuperscript{178}\textit{Freeman's Journal}, 3 June, 1916. \\
\textsuperscript{179}\textit{Ibid.}, 2 June, 1916. \\
\textsuperscript{180}\textit{Ibid.}
up of a civil tribunal to enquire into the deportations. 181

The continued announcements of deportations while the Prime Minister spoke of the need for leniency and conciliation was beginning to be a severe irritant to Irish public opinion. 182 Hope, however, was seen in the as yet unknown nature of the Lloyd George plan for settling the Irish question. Within a few days remours that the plan called for the partition of Ireland were widespread and a number of Roman Catholic bishops with Northern Irish sees issued a manifesto expressing their continued confidence in the Irish Parliamentary Party but warning that any scheme for partition would be unacceptable. 183 The Irish Unionist Alliance met in Dublin and denounced in advance any proposal for the granting of Home Rule, 184 but in this they were not supported by the Ulster Unionist Council meeting in Belfast where the Lloyd George proposals were accepted as a basis for negotiation. 185

It was under such difficult conditions of strain in both the unionist and nationalist camps that a meeting of the Irish Parliamentary Party was held in Dublin's Mansion House to discuss the Lloyd George proposals as then understood. Fear of partition dominated the discussion. The politicians clearly foresaw that their choice lay between Home Rule with temporary

181 Ibid.
182 See Cork Examiner, 6 June, 1916.
183 Freeman's Journal, 9 June, 1916. The Bishops were McHugh of Derry, McKenna of Clogher, O'Donnell of Raphoe and McRory of Down and Connor.
184 Ibid.
185 Ibid., 13 June, 1916.
partition or nothing and they were alive to the disaster in terms of popular support which would ensue if at this critical moment they failed to carry Home Rule through in some form. They were opposed by most Northern nationalists and by some of their Southern supporters, including William Martin Murphy, who argued that they could either get Home Rule and unity now or continue the struggle and get it at a later date.186

Redmond found himself faced with a strong and growing movement at home against partition which threatened to severely curtail his freedom of movement at a moment when he thought that it was possible to obtain Home Rule in exchange for the strictly temporary exclusion of six Ulster counties. For a man who had devoted his entire adult life to Home Rule it was an offer which seemed worthwhile and indeed well nigh irresistible and so he set out to overcome the opposition and this was an awesome task. From all over Ireland came resolutions which on the whole expressed continued support of the Irish Party, but which also rejected any tampering with the unity of the island. The Nationalists of Derry rejected partition.187

A meeting of local boards and clergy of North Monaghan adopted a series of resolutions, one of which said:

That we regard it as a fundamental condition of any final settlement that Ireland be treated as one and indivisible, and that there be no exclusion of any county or part of the county in the scheme of self-government to be established in Dublin. That we emphatically refuse to countenance or encourage

186 Freeman's Journal, 12 and 13 June, 1916.
187 Ibid., 13 June, 1916.
any settlement, temporary or final, in which Ireland is not treated as one and indivisible, without exclusion of any county or part of a county.\textsuperscript{188}

Other bodies from north and south adopted resolutions manifesting the same spirit. The Kilmallock Guardians and the Mallow Council passed anti-partition resolutions.\textsuperscript{189}

The Cork County Board of the Ancient Order of Hibernians expressed its continued support for Redmond but also viewed with disfavour any attempt at partition.\textsuperscript{190} The Kells Division of the A.O.H. demanded Home Rule for all Ireland and declared that "we will not agree to the exclusion of any Ulster County". Other branches of the A.O.H. and of the United Irish League variously condemned, deplored and regretted the contemplation of partition even if only temporary or else insisted on the inclusion of Ulster in any self-government scheme.\textsuperscript{191}

Their stand was vigorously endorsed and supported by William Martin Murphy's \textit{Independent} newspapers. Redmond decided to deal with the nationalists of Ulster on their home ground and he arranged for a conference of northern nationalists to be held in Belfast. The advantage of such a move was that the Party leadership would be able to exercise some control over the delegates admitted to a formal conference. Belfast seemed a suitable venue as a conference of fifteen hundred nationalists from the city had already approved acceptance of temporary exclusion.\textsuperscript{192}

\textsuperscript{188}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{189}\textit{Cork Examiner}, 13 June, 1916.

\textsuperscript{190}\textit{Freeman's Journal}, 14 June, 1916.

\textsuperscript{191}\textit{Freeman's Journal}, 14, 15, and 16 June, 1916.

\textsuperscript{192}\textit{Cork Examiner}, 19 June, 1916.
Before this conference was held Irish Party leaders and the nationalist press conducted a vigorous campaign in favour of acceptance of temporary exclusion. The O'Brienites were thoroughly alienated by this campaign and the Independent newspapers naturally did not support it while the Irish Times continued to oppose Home Rule root and branch. The Party was made conscious of the pressures under which they were to secure some measure of Home Rule when two thousand people paraded in Dublin under republican flags to the General Post Office where a collection on behalf of the Irish National Aid Association, an Irish Republican Brotherhood cover organization, was taken up. The police made a futile attempt to disperse the crowd and ended up making seven arrests. In a city still under martial law this conciliatory spirit despite intense provocation reflected the indecision which affected the authorities. The Government or at least the Liberals in the Coalition were anxious to let Redmond deal with such disturbances and he in turn was more than willing to assume this responsibility but it was clear that the extremists were not cowed and that should the bid for Home Rule fail once again the Irish Party would meet stiff competition.

Southern unionist interests were also organizing in opposition to the Home Rule proposal as well as to partition. The House of Bishops of the Church of Ireland met and passed a resolution of "emphatic protest" at the proposal and the resolution continued:

We understood that the settlement of controversial questions of domestic policy had by common agreement been postponed until the end of the war, and we deprecate the attempt to force upon the country a system of government hastily devised and imperfectly understood, while the anxieties of war preclude that full and frank discussion which is due to proposals of so momentous a character.

At this moment of Imperial crisis we are ready to make great sacrifices in favour of any scheme for the future government of Ireland, calculated to unite our countrymen and to secure the blessings of law and peace for them all. But we are not satisfied, from such evidence as is accessible to us, that the paramount plea of Imperial necessity, which has been urged in high quarters, is sufficiently well founded to justify the hasty adoption of a policy of dismemberment, with which no Irishman is content, and which does not give the promise of permanence, of unity or of the impartial operation of the common law.194

The Irish Unionist Alliance meeting in Dublin also protested through a unanimous resolution declaring:

That we renew our solemn protest against the proposed settlement of the Irish question for the following reasons amongst others:

1) Because the policy of endeavouring to palliate American opinion, real or exaggerated, by the sacrifice of her own loyal subjects is unworthy of the British Empire, and foredoomed to failure.

2) Because the proposed settlement is a flagrant violation of the Parliamentary truce.

3) Because it is a concession to the recent rebellion, and will be regarded by lawless men in every county as encouragement to violence and crime.

4) Because it involves the partition of Ireland, a country in itself, all too small as a political and economic unit.

5) Because no party in the country really desires it or welcomes its advent.

6) Because it entails the abandonment of Unionists by Unionists and Nationalists by Nationalists.

7) Because coming as it does between the recent rebellion and the Imperial Conference promised by the Prime Minister at the end of the war, it has no possibility of success, while it will prove a stumbling block in the way of any great federal scheme which might be contemplated at that Conference, because, instead of being a settlement it would prove an unsettlement in Ireland, and a danger to the Empire.

In the opinion of this Alliance, what is required at the present moment is the minimum and not the maximum of change necessary for the good government of the country.  

The Southern unionists also at this time worked behind the scenes in Westminster to undermine Cabinet support for the Lloyd George scheme. They were not entirely successful in this and in fact they may have contributed to Lloyd George's recognition of the absolute necessity of partition.  

The Irish Parliamentary Party, meanwhile, unveiled its plan for the immediate bringing into force of the Home Rule Act. The plan, as presented to the Irish people by the press, consisted of six points:

1) To bring the Home Rule Act into immediate operation.
2) To introduce at once an Amending Bill as a strictly war emergency Act, to cover only the period of the war and a short specified interval after it.
3) During that period the Irish members to remain at Westminster in their full numbers.
4) During the war emergency period six Ulster Counties to be left as at present under the Imperial Government.
5) Immediately after the war, an Imperial Conference of representatives from all the Dominions of the Empire to be held to consider the future government of the Empire including the question of the government of Ireland.
6) Immediately after this Conference, and during the interval provided for by the war emergency

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Act, the permanent settlement of all the great outstanding problems, such as the permanent position of the six exempted counties, the question of finance, and other problems which cannot be dealt with during the war would be proceeded with. 197

It was on the basis of this plan, which made clear that the exclusion of the six Ulster counties in dispute was to be purely temporary, that John Redmond was able to secure acceptance from the Belfast Nationalist Convention by a vote of 475 to 265. 198 The size of the minority despite all the efforts of Redmond and Devlin as well as the use of the more manageable convention device testifies to the difficulty of the position in which the Irish Parliamentary Party found itself. Redmond, however, was succeeding in his efforts to rally enough support to carry through Home Rule with temporary exclusion. In so doing he alienated a number of his followers and he incurred greater opposition than ever from O'Brien and Healy who denounced all settlement proposals which depended on a form of partition, arguing that any exclusion once granted would necessarily become permanent. 199 Dr. McHugh, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Derry publicly condemned the acceptance of temporary exclusion by Redmond and Devlin and a number of Church of Ireland Bishops joined most Roman Catholic Bishops in condemning partition. 200 The Independent newspapers adopted the O'Brien-Healy line and condemned the Irish Party

for "the betrayal of Ulster".\footnote{Ibid., 1 July, 1916.} It seems clear that had Redmond proved able to carry off Home Rule, as he seemed on the point of doing, temporary partition would have been accepted albeit reluctantly. From Redmond's standpoint it seemed that as the Ulster unionists were accepting the temporal limitation on exclusion, the nationalists must accept the geographical limitation imposed on Home Rule and he went so far as to express his gratitude to the Ulster unionists for their acceptance of the Lloyd George scheme as he then understood it.\footnote{Ibid.}

The Irish Parliamentary Party was then under attack on two fronts within the broad nationalist camp. One attack was internal coming from its own supporters who objected to partition but remained dedicated to constitutionalism. The other came from the growing acceptance of Sinn Fein due in large part to the continuation of martial law throughout Ireland. Cardinal Logue, a politically very moderate man, added his voice to the growing wave of protest over martial law when, having described the rebellion as "a foolish and absurd insurrection" wherein not one in five hundred of those taking part knew in advance what had been planned, he told the Maynooth Union that:

It is not my business, of course, to criticize the Government of the country but I think they have mismanaged the whole business. The first thought that occurred to me when I heard on the evening of Easter Monday and was shocked to hear - of this foolish and pernicious, and what turned
out to be fatal, insurrection, or attempted insurrection, was - Now the public authorities will muddle this, as sure as the sun shines. And they had muddled it. No person would find fault with them for defending the rights of the State - certainly, I would not - or for punishing moderately and within the laws of humanity, those who violated the laws of the state, but they sent emissaries through the whole country and picked up every man who belonged to the Irish Volunteers, although it is my firm conviction that the great body of Volunteers knew nothing about it. But they picked all these men up as suspects, took them away from their businesses, their families and their friends, and sent them to England, either to jail or concentration camps. I think that was the greatest act of folly any Government could have been guilty of.203

John Dillon, replying to a protest forwarded to the leadership of the Irish Party concerning arrests and deportations, commented that:

The military Government of Ireland, under which we have now lived for two months, has manufactured Sinn Feiners by tens of thousands, and I know districts where no Sinn Feiners existed before the insurrection and in which, owing entirely to the military administration following the suppression of the insurrection, the majority of the population are now Sinn Fein in their sympathies.204

The Irish Parliamentary Party was still as this time showing every sign of being confident that a Home Rule measure could be secured. The need to accept temporary partition had considerably eroded the Party's public support but it could safely be forecast that the triumph of finally bringing back from Westminster a measure of self-government would more than restore whatever had been lost. At the very end of June Lord Lansdowne, speaking in the House of Lords, refered to the

204Ibid., 29 June, 1916.
Ulster exclusion proposal being considered by the Cabinet as being permanent.\(^{205}\) This naturally caused some embarrassment to the Irish Party. Lord Lansdowne, however, was known to be an old guard member of the ascendancy. He had been one of the Unionist negotiators at the Buckingham Palace Conference of 1914, and it was only to be expected that he would be an opponent of Home Rule within the Cabinet. His remarks concerning the Home Rule proposal therefore were interpreted as being merely a reflection of his own personal views regarding the subject but the public revelation that the Cabinet was not united on the question did provide a further source of anxiety for Redmond. Otherwise things were going rather well and public bodies were rallying to the Party's support, though a number of Ulster nationalists, particularly from Fermanagh and Tyrone were most unhappy at being included in the area of proposed partition and they openly called for county option whereby they might hope to vote themselves into the Home Rule portion of Ireland.\(^{206}\)

A few days later the expectations of the Irish Parliamentary Party began to crumble. The Prime Minister did reiterate that exclusion of the six Ulster counties was to be temporary but he added that he and the Government absolutely rejected the coercion of Ulster.\(^{207}\) There was

\(^{205}\) Freeman's Journal, 1 July, 1916.


\(^{207}\) Freeman's Journal, 10 July, 1916.
little reaction to the Prime Minister's statement on the part of the Party leaders but in the absence of coercion it was clear that Ulster was not about to swallow Home Rule now or at war's end. Once more Lord Lansdowne intervened and in an unmistakable and unequivocal speech in the House of Lords he promised that the exclusion of Ulster from any Home Rule measure was permanent and he added that, in his opinion, military government had to be continued in the south of Ireland to prevent any possible repetition of the events of Easter.208 This deliberately offensive speech was greeted with dismay by the Irish Parliamentary Party who accused Lord Lansdowne of proposing a return to coercion in Ireland.209 The Irish Party leaders found themselves in a difficult position since the only policy which would be satisfactory from their point of view involved the coercion of Ulster unionists and yet they were unwilling to advocate such a step openly. In Ireland Lord Lansdowne's speech threatened to start a crisis of confidence. In Londonderry the National Volunteers held a meeting to protest against partition and, even more serious from the Party's point of view, the Callan Board of Guardians, by a vote of ten to six, passed a resolution of nonconfidence in the Irish Parliamentary Party.210

Redmond's response was to demand to see the text of the

209 Ibid.
Bill referring to the assurances which he had received from Lloyd George. The Freeman's Journal speculated that Lord Lansdowne might have convinced the rest of the Cabinet to renege on its promises to Redmond. The uneasiness continued to grow as Redmond's demand failed to elicit any response from the Government and the introduction of the Bill was delayed. Tension increased until slight relief was provided by the Prime Minister's announcement on 19th July that the Irish Government Bill would be introduced in the House of Commons during the following week. The Cork Examiner, commenting on the fears then current among nationalists in Ireland, concluded that:

... the situation is clear from the Nationalist point of view. The Bill will be repudiated by the National Party if it provides for permanent exclusion. Meanwhile until the measure is introduced next week theorising is useless but Mr. Asquith can be assured in advance that as far as Nationalist Ireland is concerned the permanent exclusion of any part of Ireland is unthinkable, and no matter what the consequences may be the country will face them before yielding on that front. If the Government have not sufficient backbone to abide by the terms of the agreement, the Nationalists of Ireland have, and though they desire peace, they do not fear the future, even if it bring coercion and other barbarous resources that replace constitutional Government, and which only prove that British statesmen cannot rule a country that will never yield her right to Nationhood.

The following day a memorandum from Redmond to the Prime Minister was published. In this document Redmond reiterated

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his demand for the immediate publication of the Bill and also confirmed that the Irish Parliamentary Party would reject the measure if permanent exclusion were part of its provisions.\footnote{Freeman's Journal, 21 July, 1915.}

The Government's delay in making their proposal public, the rumours concerning permanent partition and the obvious anxiety of the Irish Party leaders all contributed to the anguish of the nationalists of the six counties facing exclusion. A meeting of northern nationalists was held in Londonderry and took a more militant stand against all partition proposals than had been manifest at the earlier Belfast convention. The meeting adopted a resolution:

That this meeting, representing the Nationalists of Fermanagh, Tyrone, Derry City and County, hereby condemns the proposed partition of Ireland, whether temporary or permanent, and declare that any division of the country would be subversive to the principle of Irish Nationality, and abhorrent to all true Irishmen. That we hereby pledge ourselves to oppose by every means in our power any attempt that may be made to set up a separate form of Government for a number of Ulster counties, and that if such a separate machinery of Government be set up we will refuse to recognize it and will resist its authority, that we call on the Nationalist members of Parliament for Tyrone and Fermanagh, who have supported exclusion to resign their seats forthwith and allow the people of their constituencies to elect representatives who will give effect to their opinions. That as immediate action is necessary to avert the danger of these partition proposals being carried, we determine to organize ourselves for the purpose of defeating them and securing the full measure of Ireland's demands. That the promoters of this meeting be appointed to form the nucleus of an Organizing Committee, and that they be further requested to invite the co-operation of the Nationalists of the rest of Ireland, and that they are hereby authorized to take immediate steps to further the objects in view.\footnote{Ibid., 21 July, 1916.}
This resolution is of immense interest because it marks the origin of a political movement which in the months ahead would sap the foundations of the Irish Party's support at home and it also makes clear that this movement was not inspired by Sinn Fein ideology. What was happening under the threat of partition was the emergence of a revitalized Home Rule movement. A movement which the Irish Parliamentary Party was unable to contain or to lead. It envisaged constitutional action at Westminster, not war as desired by the Irish Republican Brotherhood or abstention from parliamentary politics as proposed by Sinn Fein, and its inspiration derived from Parnell rather than Pearse or Griffith.

Dr. McHugh, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Derry, had declined an invitation to attend this meeting but in his letter to the organizers he had denounced "the wretched bargaining that has been going on, whereby Irishmen calling themselves representatives of the people are prepared to sell their brother Irishmen into slavery". This indirect attack by the Bishop of Derry was followed up by a letter to the Independent newspapers in which the full bitterness of those who would be most immediately faced with partition was expressed. The letter is worthy of quotation in full because it illustrates the kind of frustration which would sound the knell of the Irish Parliamentary Party two and a half years later though this could not be foreseen at the time. Dr. McHugh wrote that:

The tragic events that are reported in the Press from day to day show that the fate of Ireland a nation is in the balance. The men whom she delegated to voice her sentiments in the great assembly of the United Kingdom, to defend her integrity, and to secure her independence have failed to carry out that commission. In all the trying vicissitudes through which our poor country has passed she has remained one and undivided.

Her liberty and her independence were battered and betrayed in the sordid transaction of the Union, but still she was sold, not piecemeal, but as one. Neither betrayal nor persecution, nor the vigour of the Penal Laws was able to divide the sons or the soil of Erin. Blessed by St. Patrick as a nation, the children of Erin have clung to the national ideal with a tenacity surpassed only by their loyalty to the faith that he planted in their breasts. And are Irishmen of to-day going to prove themselves degenerate sons of their great and noble forbears? Are we going to surrender even without a national protest the inheritance of an United Ireland handed down to us intact through ages of persecution and bloodshed?

Is the spirit of Ireland dead, or has her manhood departed, that she can stand listlessly by and see all the endurance, all the organized effort of centuries brought to nought, and her birthright bartered for less than a mess of pottage by those who had entrusted to them the sacred duty of guarding and defending her?

Are we so indifferent to the memory of our sainted forefathers as to allow the last resting place of St. Patrick and St. Brigid, the spot dearest on earth to St. Columkille, and the Primatial see of Ireland's Father in the Faith, to be included in a new Pale and cut off from the fatherland? In such an event what a mockery it would be to speak any longer of Ireland a nation?

Is Ireland not greater and more dear to us than any little conclave of individuals, however important and indispensable they may seem to themselves?

With all her glorious past, has Ireland fallen so low in the balance of intellect and political acumen, has she become so bankrupt in ability that she must trust her All to the intelligence and uncontrolled will of a few?
Surely Ireland is not yet dead! No doubt through the apathy of the people she is on the dissecting table; but fortunately the fatal knife has not yet begun its fell work. Let her shake off her lethargy before it is too late, and let not generations to come curse her sons of to-day for having deprived them of the inheritance to which ages of sacrifice has entitled them. Why should not the Sons of Erin meet as they did in the days of yore when any great crisis threatened? Why should they not make the nation ring with the echo of their cry—We must have Ireland one and undivided should the heavens fall? Why not a National Convention, summoned by the people, and under the presidency of some great and fearless Irish layman chosen by the people? The happenings in Belfast, Dublin and London during the past few weeks must leave an indelible stain on the fair fame of this dear old land of ours unless the nation rises to the occasion and disavows all connection with doings as despicable as any reached in the history of the Union.218

Confidence in the leadership of the Irish Parliamentary Party was visibly shaken and public bodies, meetings of the Ancient Order of Hibernians and of the United Irish League passed resolutions calling upon the leaders to consult with the Irish people. The sentiment voiced by Father McCarvill at an Enniskillen meeting that "if partition was the best result of 40 years of agitation it made a sad case for constitutional agitation" found a growing echo throughout Ireland.219 The Party's last hope, and it seemed more forlorn as each day passed, was that the Government would live up to what Redmond understood as its undertakings with him and make partition purely temporary. His memorandum to the Prime Minister announcing that the Irish Government Bill

219 Ibid.
would be rejected unless partition were clearly temporary
had been an attempt to stiffen the Government's resolve.
William O'Brien and Tim Healy had exposed temporary exclusion
as largely a face saving device given the constitutional
principle that no parliament can bind any future parliament
and under different circumstances this might have been imposed
upon the Unionists by a Liberal Government with a majority in
the House of Commons or dependent on Irish Party support. In
1916 the Unionists were in the Coalition Cabinet and the Irish
Party had chosen to remain outside. The Unionists were thus
far better placed than the Nationalists to stiffen the Prime
Minister's resolve. In addition Lloyd George who had been
carrying on the negotiations on behalf of the Government with
both Irish factions had now become Secretary of State for War
and was no longer involved to the same extent in searching for
a solution to the Irish question. The final breakdown in
negotiations was announced in the Irish press on 25th July
and the announcement was accompanied by Redmond's bitter warning
that:

I want this House, and I want the Government clearly to understand that they have entered
upon a course which is bound to increase Irish suspicion of the good faith of British statesmen,
a course which is bound to inflame feeling in Ireland, and is bound to do serious mischief to
the high Imperial interests which we are told necessitated the provisional settlement of this
question.220

The Irish Party's official attitude towards the exclusion
of the six Ulster counties with a Unionist majority may be

more clearly understood with the aid of an anecdote concerning Tom Kettle related by John Horgan. Kettle was the brother-in-law of Francis Sheehy-Skeffington and as an officer in the British army the Dublin insurrection had been for him a personal as well as a national tragedy. In July, 1916 he addressed one of the meetings held in Dublin to consider the Government's Irish plans and Horgan reports that:

He contributed a short speech to the discussion which was a lucid summary of the problem confronting us. "Mr. Chairman", he said, "if a very needy and somewhat dishonest individual owed you £32, and when you proceeded to sue him you found that he had squared the judge and packed the jury, but that at the last moment he offered you £26 on account, what ought you to do? I am but a poor lawyer but I should strongly advise you to accept the money without prejudice".221

However reasonable this position may have been it offered no satisfaction of the emotional needs of Irish nationalists and as another commentator on the period has pointed out:

Redmond could not face Irish - and especially Ulster - Nationalists on any other platform save that of temporary exclusion, and even that he would find difficulty in carrying. Carson could not face Irish and especially Ulster - Unionists with anything less than permanent exclusion, and even this they would be reluctant to accept.222

The element of deception in the Lloyd George negotiation which embittered relations between the Irish Party and the Government arose because Lloyd George, responding to pressure within the Cabinet from his Unionist colleagues, and from Lord Lansdowne in particular, as well as to the political

221 Parnell to Pearse, op. cit., p. 205.
realities of the day, had provided Sir Edward Carson with written guarantees concerning the ultimate fate of Ulster, assuring him that Ulster would not be forced into a Home Rule Ireland against her will. At the same time in order to keep the negotiations going he had not only failed to disclose to Redmond the nature of his assurances to Carson but he had encouraged the belief that exclusion was to be purely temporary. The deception effectively put an end to the improved relations which had existed between the Irish Party and Liberal politicians since 1910 but it left Redmond without allies at Westminster at a time when his efforts at securing agreement over temporary exclusion had inevitably involved what has been described as "a frightful cost" in terms of support at home.  

Now he had won nothing but had lost much.

Irish public opinion aroused by the Dublin rising and by its aftermath of martial law reacted emotionally rather than rationally to partition proposals and deserted Redmond. Father Walter McDonald later commented rather bitterly "...we Celts refused Home Rule when we found that it did not empower us to govern, with ourselves, another race who detest our government".  But the effect on the Irish Party's home support was severe. The perception of Lloyd George's duplicity

224 Some Ethical Questions of Peace and War, op. cit., p. 155.
in dealing with Redmond only reinforced the determination of Irish public opinion not to give up the claim to any part of Ireland even temporarily, and as F.S.L. Lyons pointed out:

A gulf, and one may say an unbridgeable gulf, was opened between the Irish party and both the major English parties. The long war of manoeuvre initiated by Parnell had come to this abject end, and two inevitable results followed. On the one hand, the Irish constitutionalists, convinced to their utmost core that they had been tricked and betrayed, were placed in the position where, even if they wished to do so, they dared not negotiate again with English statesmen. Redmond was so deeply wounded that for many months he would hold no communication whatever with Lloyd George, while Dillon was never again to enter into negotiations with English ministers. The other fatal result to follow from this miserable episode was that the position of the Irish party in Ireland, already precarious enough, was now compromised beyond recovery. If, after straining every nerve, and asking extreme sacrifices from their fellow countrymen, this was how the parliamentarians were requited in England, then the moral was clear. Sinn Fein had no better recruiting sergeant than Lord Lansdowne.225

To link the growth of Sinn Fein support so closely with disillusionment over the abortive fate of the Home Rule negotiations of 1916 is to collapse the events of the following months into too short a conceptual frame though eventually this proved to be the case. The immediate reaction was a loss of support by the Irish Parliamentary Party which did not turn to Sinn Fein but rather to a more vociferous demand for Home Rule for all Ireland. Robert Kee has made the point that:

It was the failure to achieve a settlement in the new situation created by the actions of Pearse and his companions that was now the real turning point in the Nationalist Party's future. The suspicion

that had lain over Home Rule ever since it had been placed on the Statute Book and which had been aggravated when Carson and Smith had joined the government, and allayed only by the confident reassurances of Redmond, was now openly confirmed. It was not to go through. The Parliamentary Party were revealed in this last opportunity as unable to win Home Rule after all without permanently partitioning Ireland. In the new atmosphere created by the rebellion the demand for Home Rule was now too firm to be disappointed much longer.226

The Irish Party had certainly had its prestige severely undermined by the letters of the Roman Catholic Bishops of Limerick and Derry and now the Party sustained a further damaging attack from Dr. Walsh, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, who chose this moment to break his long silence on political questions. The Archbishop wrote a letter to the press in which he said:

For years past I have never had a moment's doubt that the Irish Home Rule cause in Parliament was being led along a line that could only bring it to disaster. But it was impossible to shut one's eyes to the lamentable fact that Nationalist Ireland, or to speak with accuracy, the preponderating majority of our people who still retained faith in the efficiency of constitutional agitation, had become hopelessly possessed of the disastrous idea that "the Party", or to use the new-fangled term, its "leaders", could do no wrong. Fair criticism was at an end, and anyone, thoroughgoing Nationalist though he might be, who ventured to express an opinion at variance with theirs became at once a fair mark for every political adventurer in the country to assail with the easily handled epithet of "factionist", "wrecker" or "traitor". Having then, a duty to discharge to the ecclesiastical position that I have the honour to hold, I felt that I could most fittingly indicate my strong view of the lamentable position of the Home Rule cause by what seemed to me a sufficiently striking indication of it, absolute abstention from everything that could be regarded as expressing concurrence in the course that was being pursued.

226 The Green Flag, op. cit., p. 587.
The country seemed satisfied with that course: - The Home Rule Act was on the Statute Book; it could not be displaced or modified without "our" consent: The end of the war would automatically bring with it the re-opening of our old Irish Parliament in College Green; and so on.

As the necessary result of the abandonment of the policy of Independent Opposition, - the only policy that can be followed with safety by Irish representatives in the British House of Commons, - our country is now face to face with a truly awful prospect.

The Home Rule Act is still on the Statute Book. Will Irish Nationalists any longer be fooled by a repetition of the party cries, that this fact makes them masters of the situation; that the Act cannot be modified without Nationalist consent; and that Ireland awaits only the end of the war to find the portals of the Old House in College Green automatically opened for the entry of the members of a Parliament greater than Grattan's.

To this letter he appended one of his characteristically devastating postscripts:

I cannot close this letter without expressing my amazement that the country has so long allowed its attention to be distracted with all sorts of side issues regarding the Irish Parliament that is to be whilst an effective bar is kept up - for this is what it comes to - against all real consideration of the question whether the Parliament that is to come to us is to be a Parliament in any sense worthy of the name.227

This postcript contains a seed which would shortly bear fruit, though once again not immediately, to the direct advantage of Sinn Fein. It was the anti-partitionist Home Rulers who would within a few weeks be demanding "Colonial Home Rule" on the model of Australia and Canada rather than simply the more limited form of self-government envisaged in the Act then on the Statute Book.

At the same time Dr. O'Dwyer re-entered the debate. The

Belfast Anti-Partition Committee had asked the Bishop of Limerick to endorse their efforts to avert partition and in his reply he delivered a fierce attack on the Irish Party in which he said:

I can well understand your anxiety and indignation at the proposal of your political leaders to cut you off from your country, and hand you over to the Orangemen of the North. But I have very little pity for you. For years you have acquiesced in a kind of political servitude in which your most important function was to shout the shibboleths of what they call "the Party".

You gave up willingly the right to think, and became puppets. You saw the interests of your religion sacrificed to the bigotry of English Nonconformists, and never said a word. You thought it a grand thing for one of your idols to occupy the pulpit on a Sunday in a Protestant conventicle in London.

You have ceased to be men, and your leaders naturally think that they can sell you like chattels - but if they can they will.

My sorrow in all this disgraceful business is for our poor country, that is being made a thing of truck and barter in the Liberal Clubs in London.

I doubt very much that this partition scheme will become law. It is so absurd and so impracticable that I do not think that it is a sincere proposal. But of one thing I am certain, that in our devotion to our glorious British Empire we have piled a mountain of debt and taxation on Ireland that will make it a matter of very little difference whether we are in the 26 counties of the mere Irish, or in the 6 counties of the Pale.228

Thus the Roman Catholic hierarchy who so far had not openly opposed the Irish Parliamentary Party now heaped coals on the fires of resentment and disillusion which were consuming Ireland. The day Dr. O'Dwyer's letter was published there was also a newspaper account of a meeting in Phoenix Park called by the Anti-Partition League at which ten thousand

people were reported to have been present. This meeting had issued a call for support from nationalists from all parts of Ireland.\footnote{229}\footnote{Ibid.}

The growing alienation from the Irish Parliamentary Party had roots which went far into the past and it had been evident ever since the delay in passing into law of the Home Rule Bill and later the delay in implementation of the Act. It had been significantly accelerated by the realization in Ireland that the Party, having secured the passage of a Home Rule Act, had then failed to win its application to all Ireland. Many were dismayed that having based a recruiting appeal largely on the passage of the Home Rule Act that passage was now in jeopardy. In the absence of conscription Ireland's contribution to the army had been considerable despite what appeared to Irish eyes as a deliberate War Office policy of discouraging Southern Irishmen from joining. The rebellion had not been supported by the vast majority of the Irish people and had in fact been put down largely by Irish troops. Now the reward of Ireland for unprecedented loyalty manifested in the war as well as in the recent domestic crisis appeared to be martial law and indiscriminate arrests as well as a regression in the scope of Home Rule. The Government did not even appear to be offering a return to the pre-war position. The considerable sacrifices of Ireland to the cause of the British Empire in the war had been made in vain. This
understanding of the situation was certainly unrealistic and it ignored the difficulties which had confronted Home Rule even prior to the war as well as the fact that Ulster unionists had sacrificed much, indeed more, to the common cause and also expected a reward. There is little doubt, however, that this kind of perception was very widespread among nationalists and that it led to considerable frustration.

Emile Durkheim asked in one of his works, "what could be more disillusioning than to proceed towards a terminal point that is non-existent, since it recedes in the same measure as one advances?" For Irishmen in 1916 Home Rule for all Ireland was assuming that constantly receding character in spite of all efforts to reach it. Modern psychology provides an explanation of what was happening to Irish public opinion in 1916. The situation was becoming intolerable because of the expectations which had been built up since Gladstone and particularly since 1912. As has been pointed out:

A situation can become intolerable not because it has no solution, but because the preferred solutions are not available, or because attempted solutions seem to fail. What matters is that the person feels walled in, irrespective of objectively specifiable alternatives. He perceives the workaday world to be closed, and he therefore looks for a way out. He is motivated by a feeling of futility and despair.

Irishmen in large numbers were becoming prey to such feelings of futility and despair in 1916 as the latest hope of a solution

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seemed to fade away. In the popular mind Redmond became linked with the duplicity attributed to Lloyd George and to Asquith. Yet despite this the aim of the great majority of Irishmen continued to be Home Rule rather than radical separation from the United Kingdom. Some remained content to continue in their support of the Party and a significant number would have supported it had it gone into vigorous opposition to the Government, but Redmond, whatever his dismay at Lloyd George and at the Government, was unable to oppose the war effort to which he had so firmly committed himself. Among the Home Rulers in Ireland that commitment counted for far less and gradually they moved out of their old political allegiances without necessarily rejecting the Party's fundamental goal. Hans Toch is again helpful in understanding the course taken by Irish public opinion in the face of disillusionment and he observed that:

Most departures from socialization arise when the process creates demands which it does not satisfy. Such failures, however, are grudgingly registered and cautiously responded to. A person who has been taught from childhood to expect simple plausible, and unqualified explanations continues to require them. Where his childhood assumptions no longer provide assistance, he must never the less retain these until he finds others, similar in kind, to take their place.\footnote{Ibid., p. 116.}

The assumption that Home Rule was the solution to the Irish question was not easily abandoned even in favour of outright separation and the initial reaction within the Home Rule movement to a new setback was greater militancy fuelled by
the feelings of frustration and despair which naturally centred on the question of partition.

The attacks of some Roman Catholic bishops on the Irish Party for even countenancing temporary partition reinforced the moral righteousness which was characteristic of the anti-partition campaign. It must not be forgotten that Ireland at this time was still under martial law, a situation which aggravated frustrations. As well conscription was an ever present and highly frustrating threat. Fear of conscription was not voiced as much as it had been because of the restrictions on free expression which were imposed under martial law but the Irish Party's failure over Home Rule provided grounds for increased apprehension since its influence over the Government had been shown to be so weak that its ability to ward off conscriptionist pressures was also placed in doubt. To these factors must be added economic uncertainties which affected rural districts in particular; precisely those districts which had remained conspicuously loyal during the rising. The harvest of 1916 was a very poor one and this would contribute to a high level of frustration and deprivation in the latter part of the year. The production of grains fell off from 1,479 starch tons per acre in 1915 to 1,399 in 1916 and, more significantly, potato production fell off by 30 per cent, from 6.2 tons in 1915 to 4.2 tons in 1916; a decrease which had severe repercussions on the pig production of 1917. The price of coal had trebled
and so had the cost of building materials.\textsuperscript{233}

F. S. L. Lyons, with the help of figures contained in a study of Irish exports between 1904 and 1916 carried out by C. H. Oldham, has demonstrated that Irish exports in 1916 were much higher for almost all commodities except whiskey than they had been in 1904.\textsuperscript{234} From this one might infer that Ireland in 1916 was enjoying a high level of prosperity so that economic factors, which are usually considered important in the emergence of unrest and in departures from socialization generally, must be discounted in the Irish case as far as the political changes occurring in the summer of 1916 are concerned. However, one of the major hypotheses concerning the emergence and growth of revolutionary potential which has been advanced in recent years suggests that:

Revolutions are most likely to occur when a prolonged period of objective economic and social development is followed by a short period of sharp reversal. The all-important effect on the minds of people in a particular society is to produce, during the former period, an expectation of continued ability to satisfy needs - which continue to rise - and, during the latter, a mental state of anxiety and frustration when manifest reality breaks away from anticipated reality. The actual state of socioeconomic development is less significant than the expectation that past progress, now blocked, can and must continue in the future.\textsuperscript{235}


\textsuperscript{234} Ireland Since the Famine, op. cit., p. 359.

The recurrent postponement of Home Rule, the treatment of Roman Catholic Irishmen by the War Office, the threat of Conscription, the advent of the Coalition Government with the self-imposed exclusion of Irish politicians, the imposition of martial law; all of these represented set-backs or blockages of socio-political aspirations following upon a period in which Home Rule had been won and expectations as to its consequences had been high and at times unrealistically inflated.

In the economic sphere the discrimination against Southern Irish industry in the award of War Office contracts had hampered industrial development during the war. The Oldham study above shows that exports, particularly of farm produce, had grown significantly between 1904 and 1916 but it does not reveal that the growth of agricultural prices had slowed down between 1915 and 1916 as contrasted with the period 1914-1915. Of Ireland's major food crops only the price of potatoes increased more in 1915-1916 than it had in 1914-1915 and that was due to a disastrous crop failure. The prices of the other seven major food crops had increased by an average of 34.3 per cent in 1914-1915 and by only 21.9 per cent during 1915-1916.  

This in itself may not appear as a serious reversal but coupled with the increase of overall prices at an unprecedented rate during 1915-1916 it represents considerable relative deprivation for Irish farmers. From the end of 1915

\[236\text{Figures based on "Agricultural Prices (Ireland) Return, 1919", op. cit., p. 2.}\]
to the end of June, 1916 the wholesale price index jumped by 27.9 per cent and it jumped another 28.0 per cent by the end of 1916, an increase for the year of 55.9 per cent. This was by far the highest rate of increase for any of the war years and it more than wiped out the increase in the price of agricultural commodities to say nothing of wages which were estimated to have risen by roughly 10 per cent during the same period.\textsuperscript{237} The Freeman's Journal reported in August that "the cost of living - that is the cost of the necessities of life in proportion in which they are consumed by the average family - was last month 65 per cent higher than on the 1st August, 1914".\textsuperscript{238} The socioeconomic condition of Ireland in 1916 therefore presented a picture the outstanding feature of which was a prolonged period of development which was at that time being succeeded by a period of sharp reversal: conditions which have been recognized as likely to lead to a significant rise in revolutionary potential.

Further reverse continued to buffet the Irish Nationalists. On the first of August the appointment of Mr. Duke as Chief Secretary for Ireland was announced. Not only was the new Chief Secretary a staunch Unionist but he had publicly declared that conscription ought to be extended to Ireland. The Cork Examiner dubbed the appointment a "scandal" and

\textsuperscript{237} E. J. Riordan, Modern Irish Trade and Industry, op. cit., p. 277. See also C. Desmond Graves, Liam Mellows and the Irish Revolution, op. cit., pp. 104-105.
\textsuperscript{238} 14 August, 1916.
went on:

Was there ever such a travesty of government as that which the Coalition with the Premier's approval is imposing in this country? This is the reward which Irish Nationalists are given for having made sacrifices for peace, and because of what the Premier called "Imperial necessity". They are being handed over to a Unionist Chief Secretary, because they relied on the honour of the British Government, which, despite Mr. Asquith's special pleading, stands convicted at the bar of public opinion of having broken faith in the terms by which peace was to be secured. Who can blame Irishmen for distrusting British Ministers, after the manner in which the Coalition has served Ireland?239

The appointment was welcomed in unionist circles, and amongst nationalists it did relieve the burden of opprobrium which lay on the Irish Party. Public bodies shifted their sights once again to the British Government in a series of resolutions condemning the appointment, a matter in which the Party could in no way be implicated.241 The execution of Roger Casement added to the bitterness of these condemnations but the reappointment of Lord Wimborne as Lord Lieutenant was seen as a hopeful sign in days when such portents were far from plentiful.242

In the early part of August the fortunes of the Irish Parliamentary Party gave evidence of stabilizing. The damage done to its prestige and popular favour had been considerable and it now found a new challenge growing out of its own ranks,

2391 August, 1916.

240See Sir Henry Robinson, Memories: Wise and Otherwise, op. cit., p. 244.

241Cork Examiner, 3 August, 1916.

the Anti-Partition League. This League transformed itself into the Irish Nation League and issued a manifesto in early August which declared that: "the Irish leaders having betrayed their trust, the people of Ireland can have no further confidence in them." But the flow of deserters from the Irish Party now slowed down to a trickle.

The separatist organizations, however, also began to recover at this time and the Gaelic League, which Canon O'Leary had offered to lead, decided to adopt a clearly defiant political position by electing Eoin MacNeill, then in gaol, as its President. With the existence of such a broad range of opposition to the Irish Party every set-back it suffered could now be counted on to benefit directly either the separatists or the Irish Nation League.

However much the appointment of Mr. Duke as Chief Secretary may have been resented in nationalist circles it had been taken as presaging the end of martial law in Ireland. Shortly following his appointment, however, Mr. Duke defended the continuation of martial law thus deleting from his appointment whatever small redeeming virtue it might have had from the nationalist point of view. This dashing of hopes of improvement in Ireland's situation was immediately followed by the opening, long delayed by official procrastination, of the enquiry into the death of Francis Sheehy-Skeffington. At

244 Freeman's Journal, 8 June, 1916.
245 Cork Examiner, 9 August, 1916. The office had been vacant since Dr. Hyde's resignation in protest against the politicization of the organization.
246 Cork Examiner, 23 August, 1916.
the same time allegations were made concerning the mistreatment of Eoin MacNeill following his arrest.\textsuperscript{247} Thus the wounds of the rising and of its aftermath were reopened without the benefit of any balm. Stricter censorship of the press which was imposed by the military authorities in mid-August merely increased the currency of rumour and conjecture concerning what was happening in Ireland and while it limited the continuing manifestation of significant discontent through the press it failed to suppress it.

Financial pressures upon the United Kingdom due to the war led to a further curtailment of the grants to the Department of Agriculture in August. This provoked from the \textit{Freeman's Journal} the comment that:

\begin{quote}
The treasury vampires proceeded to suck the life-blood from the one Department in Ireland which strives to keep in touch with the people and to justify its existence by the results achieved.
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
England, with the nice profit she is deriving out of Ireland at present both in men and money, could well have afforded to do the decent thing by Irish agriculture and its various subsidiary industries.\textsuperscript{248}
\end{quote}

The loss of confidence in the Irish Parliamentary Party is strikingly illustrated in this case as very few resolutions urging the Party to take up the cause of the restoration of the grants are reported. The need for war time economy also resulted in disaffection in a vital part of the Irish administration. The Dublin Metropolitan Police issued a manifesto

\textsuperscript{247}\textit{Freeman's Journal}, 24 August, 1916.

\textsuperscript{248}26 August, 1916.
demanding higher rates of pay and complaining that "the ordinary quay labourers are paid once and a half our pay, and in some cases almost double".\textsuperscript{249} It was clear that no one in Ireland was satisfied and the Government seemed to have no remedy to offer other than allowing the military to sit on the lid of Irish discontent while the pressure built up. The Irish Party helplessly wrung its hands while the Irish Nation League and the separatists organized virtually the only political activity taking place among Southern Irish nationalists.

The publication at the end of August of a letter from the redoubtable Dr. O'Dwyer to the Lord Mayor of Cork dealt a further ecclesiastical blow to the Party and provided encouragement to the separatists. The Bishop wrote:

\begin{quote}
I am informed that some members of your Borough Council have given notice of a motion to confer on me the freedom of the City of Cork. It is assuredly a great honour for a humble individual such as I am to have his name mentioned in connection with such a distinction. But as I am also informed that you and probably a majority of the Borough Council would be opposed to that motion, I must ask you to request the gentlemen who have given a notice of it to save me from the unpleasantness of having my name made the subject of party disputes. I am not a politician; I am a mere Irishman, but looking at the course of Irish Parliamentary politics for many years, I have to say that it reflects the utmost discredit upon those responsible for it. The recent rebellion in Dublin was simply a reaction of sincere and generous hearts against the infidelity of England's paid politicians to the principles of Irish nationality. If they had not gone to one extreme with West Britonism, the young men of Ireland might not have gone to the other in their anger and disgust; and the worst of it is that even now, after
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{249}\textit{Freeman's Journal}, 23 August, 1916.
Maxwell's 'bloody assize' and Asquith and Lloyd George's duplicity, these members of Parliament are sneaking back to their old game of subserviency to English Liberals. They are too long in London; the air of the National Liberal and Eighty Clubs is too strong for them. They call themselves Irishmen, but they are only England's "friendlies".\textsuperscript{250}

This attack on the Irish Party coincided with a renewed campaign in the \textit{Irish Times} calling for conscription in Ireland to offset the lower level of recruiting which had followed the imposition of martial law.\textsuperscript{251} Recruiting had also suffered as a result of intimidation and boycott directed against Irish harvesters in England.\textsuperscript{252} From the English point of view these harvesters, exempt from conscription by virtue of being Irish, were taking over jobs in England and releasing Englishmen for conscription into the army. Resentment against them was understandable but from an Irish point of view this was but another instance of English persecution of Irishmen.

The Irish Parliamentary Party was being urged by a number of bodies in Ireland to take up a position of "independent opposition" in the House of Commons though what this involved was not entirely clear.\textsuperscript{253} The Party was in fact without a policy as well as without influence and the \textit{Cork Examiner} in a leading article calling for the immediate solution of the Irish question stated the dilemma which faced

\textsuperscript{250} \textit{Cork Examiner}, 26 August, 1916.
\textsuperscript{251} 30 August, 1916.
\textsuperscript{252} \textit{Freeman's Journal}, 28 August, 1916.
\textsuperscript{253} See \textit{Irish Weekly Independent}, 2 September, 1916.
both the Party and the Government.

When Mr. Asquith introduced the Home Rule Bill in 1912 he stated: "We cannot admit, and we will not admit, the right of a minority of the people, and relatively a small minority - particularly when every care is taken to safeguard their special interests and susceptibilities - to veto the verdict of the vast body of their fellow-countrymen".

It is true that since that time the Premier has stated that the coercion of Ulster was unthinkable, but it is equally true that the Nationalist majority have no desire that their Northern fellow-countrymen should be coerced. Similarly it is opposed to all principles of Constitutional procedure that a small minority should impose its will on a great majority. No such right exists.254

The question was what then? Either the right of the minority, particularly that part of it which was concentrated in Ulster, to remain a part of the United Kingdom had to be recognized or, failing that, resort to coercion of that minority was necessary. The Irish Parliamentary Party by refusing to support either of these possibilities and unable to advance a practicable third alternative was left in a logical as well as practical impasse. To support, at least by implication, the coercion of Ulster unionists would have been logically consistent even if practically futile. It would also have attached to the Party those elements which were now drifting away into the Irish Nation League but Redmond had become too much a supporter of the Imperial war effort to take action which, whatever its appeal in Ireland, could only have appeared irresponsible from a Westminster perspective. While bound by self-imposed rules of logic and reasonableness in the House

254 8 September, 1916.
of Commons Redmond was also prevented by the emotional climate of opinion in Ireland from agreeing to the only common sense solution which would have been acceptable at Westminster. The posture which the Party did adopt failed to meet the perceived needs of followers in Ireland, failed to impress the Government concerning their amenability to reason and failed to suggest any way out of the Irish impasse.

With the Irish Parliamentary Party at Westminster paralyzed the critical mood of Ireland grew. Even Waterford Corporation passed resolutions critical of the Party.255 In Londonderry protest meetings called to express dissatisfaction with alleged discrimination by the Corporation against Roman Catholics went on to criticize the Irish Party including its failure to stop the executions following the rising.256 In Dublin, on that same weekend, the Irish Nation League held a meeting in Phoenix Park which attracted some five thousand people. Coughlan Briscoe, who had always been a staunch Party supporter, represented the Town Tenants' Association and took a prominent part in the meeting. The address of the chairman, P. W. Kenny, a Waterford Town Councillor, and the resolutions adopted at this meeting made clear that the League's demand were escalating though there was little common ground with Sinn Fein other than a mutual distrust of the Irish Party. The resolutions were:

That we demand the instant release of all Irish political prisoners, and the immediate cessation

of martial law.
That we declare our determined opposition to conscription and will resist it by every means in our power.
That we demand full and complete self-government for all Ireland, with control of all the affairs of the Irish nation, including legislation, administration, justice, finance and commerce with countries abroad, and that the Government of Ireland Act, 1914, be amended accordingly.
That we emphatically condemn any division or attempt at division of our country, and will refuse to submit to any such division, and we call on all members of Parliament who have agreed to the partition of Ireland to resign their seats forthwith, and allow the electors to elect representatives who will give expression to their opinions.
That, as the margin of Ireland's total income available for taxation, as estimated by the Financial Relations Commission has been absorbed by the recent war imposts, and the minimum allowance set apart for the subsistence of the people is being seriously encroached upon, showing Ireland's taxable capacity has been exceeded, we call on the Government, pending the satisfaction of our demands for full self-government, to apply to Ireland the special treatment to which she is entitled under the Act of Union, wherein it is clearly stated that under no circumstances shall Ireland at any time be taxed beyond her taxable capacity.
That in order to organize the National movement on a sound basis, we resolve to assist in the formation of branches of the Irish Nation League in the city and country.257

Lest there be any misunderstanding as to the policy of the league one of the organizers, F. J. O'Connor from Omagh, explained that what they wanted was "Parliamentary agitation under different hands".258 The question of partition which was fundamental to the league's very existence continued to be a major issue and the Rev. P. O'Doherty, the Parish Priest

257Cork Examiner, 11 September, 1916. See also Irish Weekly Independent, 16 September, 1916.
of Caherdonagh declared that:

Ulster had never denied Ireland when dangers had to be encountered. If they took away Ulster they could not have Ireland in song and story. Ulster was asked by sapient gentlemen to commit suicide. Belfast politicians hated the Nationalists of Ireland, and in 24 hours they would be only too willing to drench the soil of Ireland with blood. Irish Catholics, sooner than be at the mercy of such people, would take the field, and invoke the God of Battle.259

There was no sign that the meeting saw any incongruity between such sentiments and the insistence on the unity of Ireland and of Irishmen, a circumstance which could only have reinforced the determination of Ulster Protestants to resist inclusion in a Home Rule Ireland.

In mid-September Dr. O'Dwyer again entered the lists. The Freedom of Limerick was conferred upon the Bishop and he acknowledged this honour in a lengthy address in which he flailed the British Government for its Irish policies. He justified the rising in Dublin by an appeal to Irish history and he condemned the Irish Parliamentary Party. He also endorsed Sinn Fein, the first direct public endorsement of the movement by a member of the Roman Catholic hierarchy of Ireland. In the course of the address the Bishop of Limerick declared:

The British Government and their friends ring the changes on the hopelessness of the rising and the folly of a couple of thousands of badly armed Volunteers attempting to overthrow the British power in Ireland. The Irish Volunteers were too few for the enterprise, but that perhaps was the worst that was to be said against them...The very Government which dealt with them

259 Ibid.
so mercilessly had proclaimed its own condemnation. What was the ghost of Home Rule which they kept safe in lavender on the Statute Book but a confession of the wrong of England's rule in Ireland? ...When Lord Wimborne, and Mr. Devlin, and Mr. Redmond called on young Irishmen to go to Flanders and give their lives for Home Rule in Belgium, was it not natural, in view of the state of their own country, they should ask themselves if it was not all British cant and hypocrisy? These Irish Volunteers imagined that Ireland had an inalienable right to govern herself; that the deprivation of it was worse for every interest of their country than any number of bad laws in detail that a foreign government forced on an unwilling people, that it was a usurpation, and resistance to it a duty. Of course they were wrong. These reasons might hold good against any other country, but not against England, the home of freedom, the chivalrous and disinterested friend everywhere of small nationalities that take her side. British Ministers and their allies in Ireland may condemn the criminal folly, as they called it, of those who raised the standard of revolt in Dublin, but whether they were right or wrong he submitted that at least for a semblance of justice people should remember that they only carried into practice their rulers' principles, and should be judged by the same standards that were applied to the Belgians in revolt against Germany, or the Serbians against Austria, or the Greeks against their own King to compel him to go to war. With all the preoccupation of war upon him, Mr. Asquith, from his entrenchment of "wait and see", sped across the Channel to discover what was the matter with this country. He found that Castle government had failed, and that recorded judgment of the Prime Minister of England would stand forever as the vindication of his victims....An Empire in any true sense consists of a number of kingdoms, each of which was a unit self-contained and self-governed, but all of which came together for their mutual support and benefit. But that was not the case as between England and Ireland. Irishmen had been deprived of all the attribution of a kingdom. They were a subject province. They were like Egypt, governed by English satraps of an inferior kind, but in no sense were they constituents of the British Empire. Canada and Australia were parts of the Empire, but they were not, for they were ruled, not by themselves, but by some English barrister from Bristol or Manchester, or some Jew from Shoreditch...Ireland would never be content as a province. God had made her a nation, and while grass grows and water runs
there would be men in Ireland to dare and die for her. It was that national spirit which would yet vindicate their country and not the petty intrigues of Parliamentary chicane. And if their representatives in Parliament had relied on it, instead of putting their faith in Asquith and Lloyd George and the Liberals, they would not be where they were today.... O'Connell used to say that England's difficulty was Ireland's opportunity, the modern maxim is "stand by England in her difficulties, and trust to her generosity when you have got her out of them"; shed your Irish blood like water in France and Gallipoli and Mesopotamia, and Egypt and the Cameroons, wherever that is, and you will be rewarded like the Irish agricultural labourers in Lincolnshire. Sinn Fein was, in his judgment, the true principle. An alliance with English politicians was the alliance of the lamb with the wolf, and it was at this point precisely that he differed from the present political leaders, and believed that they have led and were leading, the National Cause to disaster.²⁶⁰

Lesser Roman Catholic clerics were also joining in the condemnation of the Irish Party and, at a meeting of the Connemara Executive of the United Irish League, Mgr. McAlpine condemned Captain Gwynn, the member for Galway for having denounced the Dublin insurgents.²⁶¹

Tensions and discontent engendered by economic deprivation and by a renewed agitation for conscription in Ireland were surfacing again and the Irish Parliamentary Party once more became the target for these frustrations. A survey of wages and prices in the town of Skibbereen revealed that while wages had risen by slightly less than ten per cent since the out-break of the war, prices had risen much faster, the prices

²⁶⁰Cork Examiner, 15 September, 1916.
²⁶¹Irish Weekly Independent, 16 September, 1916.
of potatoes, meal, coal and turf having at least doubled during the same period. The Dublin Trades Council organized a meeting in Phoenix Park to protest against increases in the cost of living. To the malaise induced by rapid economic deterioration was added fear of conscription. Unionist agitation in favour of the extension of conscription to Ireland had been gathering strength ever since the rising. Unionists had always favoured conscription for Ireland largely for patriotic reasons even if not unmixed on occasion with spite towards nationalists but now the argument advanced was that the Irish, who for no good reason had been granted the immense privilege of exemption from a measure vital to victory, had responded to this grant by inadequate voluntary enlistment, rebellion and the ungrateful spurning of Home Rule for that part of the country where nationalists constituted a majority, deserved to be conscripted. For the nationalists who perceived Ireland as a country separate from Great Britain with rights of self-determination the question of conscription was bound to be seen differently. A leading article in the nationalist press at the time of renewed conscription agitation put the case as seen by Irish Home Rulers:

We were and are out for the triumph of the allies over Kaiserdom. First, in the interests of Ireland and, secondly, because militarism in every guise is hateful; but we confess that at the outbreak of the war, we were offered self-government with conscription, we would have firmly refused - much as we desire Home Rule -

262 Cork Examiner, 26 September, 1916.
263 Freeman's Journal, 2 October, 1916.
the offer. The reasons even then were unanswerable. It must be remembered, as Lord Lansdowne very fairly put it, great as our interests in this conflict undoubtedly are, they are not as overwhelming as are England's. Our obligations to her, it must be conceded, would have even then been of too recent a date. Even yet no colony - and they are at least bound up in its welfare as closely as our country, and are under many greater ties of gratitude, which we are not - has taken this fateful step. 264

The alleged resort to notices to quit or enlist and to large scale transfers to England in some government departments in order to force employees into the armed forces was bitterly resented in Ireland and protested by the Irish Party. 265 There is no doubt, however, that the pro-conscription campaign was intensifying in the unionist press and in other unionist circles. Dr. O'Hara, the Church of Ireland Bishop of Cashel and Waterford joined in the campaign and, after referring to the lack of enthusiasm and whole hearted support for the war effort which he claimed set Ireland apart from all other parts of the Empire, he described the exemption of Ireland from conscription as "a disgrace and a stigma which rested on Ireland". 266 Much of the English press was coming out in support of conscription for Ireland, Sir Edward Carson declared his support for it and Dr. Gregg, the Church of Ireland Bishop of Ossory joined his brother bishop, Dr. O'Hara in calling for compulsory military service. 267

266 Ibid., 27 September, 1916.
267 Ibid., 5 October, 1916.
Post" observed that as Ireland was largely without moral courage conscription was necessary to remedy that want: a statement which was fiercely resented by nationalists of all stripes. 268

The conscription issue was one over which nationalists presented a united front. The Irish Party was as opposed to such a measure as was Sinn Fein but public confidence in the Party's ability to resist unionist pressure had been shaken by the partition issue. The conscription campaign re-opened the floodgates and Party supporters deserted once again in substantial numbers. Casualty lists were noticeably longer and extremist propaganda against the Irish Party re-doubled with some success. Waterford only voted by thirteen to seven with three abstentions to present an address to John Redmond on the occasion of a formal visit to the city. 269

At the Doon annual Fheis Sean O Murthuilh commented on

... the great change for the better that came about in the district since the Fheis of 1915, when there was open hostility shown to it by local politicians. It was only natural to expect an improvement when one remembered that since then the cause of Irish Nationality had been rebaptized in the blood of the ablest, the purest, the most patriotic, and self-sacrificing Irishmen, the men who died at Eastertide. 270

The Rev. M. Curran, speaking to the Christian Brothers Past Pupils' Union in Dublin, declared that "those elected to represent them in Parliament had sold them". 271 It was not

268 Cork Examiner, 12 October, 1916.
269 Ibid., 4 October, 1916.
270 Ibid., 29 September, 1916.
271 Irish Weekly Independent, 14 October, 1916.
that such criticisms were voiced which was new and significant, Sinn Feiners had been making such attacks for many years, but rather that they were made in new quarters where they would not have been tolerated by Party supporters before.

Redmond tried to rescue the Party from the disfavour into which it was falling and he announced a new policy of firmness in opposition to both partition and conscription.272 This announcement was followed by the introduction of a resolution criticizing the government in the House of Commons. The motion read:

That the system of government at present maintained in Ireland is inconsistent with the principles for which the Allies are fighting in Europe and has been mainly responsible for the present unhappy events and for the present state of feeling in that country.273

The resolution makes clear that the Party was no longer shaping Irish public opinion but responding to pressures over which it had lost control. The debate on this resolution from the Irish Nationalist side consisted of a reiteration of all the Irish grievances of past centuries. The Party leaders were fully aware that such exercises, while they impressed constituents and restored self-esteem, had no effect on British members of the House of Commons. They were therefore dangerous in the position in which the Party was in 1916 in that they could gain nothing but would reawaken hostility and underline the powerlessness of the Party. Mr. Samuels, the Home Secretary, who

272 Ibid.

273 Freeman's Journal, 19 October, 1916.
was a Liberal Home Ruler put the Government's case in a few sentences to which the Irish Party leaders were unable to respond. His summation was clear but it offered little comfort. He said that:

He confessed he was unable to answer the fundamental contention of the Nationalist members that the woes and ills of Ireland would not be settled until Ireland had self-government, but Ulster still blocked the way. Were Irish members prepared to leave the six Ulster counties outside a Home Rule scheme? (Nationalist members - "No") Were they ready to wait for Home Rule until the six counties were ready to come in? (Cries of "No") Mr. Redmond and other Nationalist leaders had said over and over that they were not prepared to apply armed coercion to Ulster. Then what was the Nationalist proposals?

A member of the Cabinet had put forward into public view the central problem of Irish nationalism in 1916 - a problem with which Sinn Fein or the Irish Nation League were no better prepared to deal than was the Irish Party. Sinn Fein's crucial propaganda advantage rested on the fact that not being represented at Westminster, and in fact not counterancing such representation, they were never forced to deal with the Ulster problem in confrontation with Ulster unionists. They were able to ignore the Ulster block in their propaganda battle with the Party who, on the other hand, were unable to escape its massive shadow. Ulster's adamantine presence was an unpleasant fact which most nationalist Irishmen preferred to forget as it barred the way to one of their most treasured aspirations. This accounts in large measure for the growth of

274 Ibid.
Sinn Fein at the expense of the Party and of the Irish Nation League which eventually was confronted by the question that the Home Secretary had put to the Party leaders. As a student of revolution has pointed out:

The insidious nature of revolutionary propaganda is not that it converts a few activists and drives the masses to desperate deeds. The activists are there already; normally they are impotent for lack of the elements necessary to carry out a successful transition, and more frequently, perhaps, they lack the capacity to bring those elements together. Propaganda secures its full effect on the largest number of people when it induces them to make a compromise between the views it expresses and their own. The suspension of disbelief is all that the activist requires to secure his necessary temporary superiority in force.275

The debate in the House of Commons, in which the Irish Nationalists spoke in the accents of home, where they replied to Mr. Samuels' pragmatic question by citing further instances of the misdeeds of the War Office and of England throughout history, was successful in slowing down the erosion of Party support at home. Thus the growing irrationality and emotionalism of the Irish position was reinforced. The Irish Parliamentary Party unable to halt the flight from unpleasant reality was only to stem the flow of desertions by joining in this flight.

Meanwhile as the diocesan synods of the Church of Ireland took place the growing gulf between Protestants and Roman Catholic Irishmen, particularly over the conscription issue, was revealed more clearly than ever. Dr. Bernard, the Church

275 Peter Calvert, A Study of Revolution, op. cit., p. 51.
of Ireland Archbishop of Dublin, referred to Ireland's exemption from conscription as "humiliating". He also referred to the insurrection in Dublin and said that:

> It was right that Sir John Maxwell and his men should be assured that, whatever politicians or others leave unsaid, large numbers of Dublin citizens were deeply grateful to them for their protection and also for their forbearance... Some of those who took part in the rebellion were of their own Church. He grieved to say it but it was true, and they were ashamed of them. The Church of Ireland had many critics, and they were charged with many faults, but at least it was not their way to condone crime, even when the criminal was of their own faith, that was not a political matter. It was a matter of right and wrong, and they held that the killing of unarmed policemen and soldiers, as the signal for revolution, was wicked as well as cowardly.276

Dr. Bernard also joined with Lord Dunraven to call for conscription in Ireland.277 Within a few days Dr. Dowse, the Church of Ireland Bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross called for conscription278 and Dr. Keene, the Church of Ireland Bishop of Meath issued a condemnation of the Dublin rising.279

The Church of Ireland Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of Ireland declared to his diocesan synod:

> What an insult to the memory of our noble dead if there were no longer Irishmen found to take their places by sea and land. What a degradation to our native land if Irish regiments were henceforth to be recruited from England, Scotland and Wales, or even from the Channel Island, while tens of thousands of Irishmen grow prosperous on the spoils of the war - and all because

278Freeman's Journal, 24 October, 1916.
279Ibid., 27 October, 1916.
politicians are too cowardly to treat Ireland as on an equality of service with the rest of the Empire. The friends and relatives of the gallant dead cry shame upon us that Irishmen are hanging back, largely, he believed, because they say in their hearts (and not altogether without a cause), "If Great Britain wants us why not send and fetch us". It almost breaks the heart of those of us who really love Ireland and are jealous for her honour that when the nations of the world "sob with the ceaseless horror of war", and right and justice, and honour, and God cry out for help, so many thousands of able-bodied Irishmen should stand aloof as callous spectators.280

Dr. Peacocke, the Church of Ireland Bishop of Derry and Raphoe declared that the events of the past year had confirmed Ulster's attitude towards Home Rule and he also called for conscription.281 In November Lord Dunraven returned to the fray and once again called for conscription in Ireland declaring:

It is the duty of the King's Ministers to save Ireland if necessary from herself. If Ireland fails now it is an end. "Finis" must be written to all her hopes and aspirations. And in her shame all Irishmen will be implicated. The brand of Cain will be on her brow, and all Irishmen, whatever their class, creed or domicile, will wince under it. Ireland must be saved, if even against her will.282

Under the impact of such an onslaught of unionist pro-conscription sentiment fears of conscription mounted, but the Irish Party, now following its "new" policy of firmness, inspired somewhat greater confidence. The Party had also found an issue which regrouped nationalist opinion under its

280 Ibid.
281 Ibid., 1 November, 1916.
282 Ibid., 3 November, 1916.
banner in agitation for the release of Irish internees. Here again, however, it was the Party supporters in Ireland who provided the impetus which activated the leadership. The announcement of the replacement of Sir John Maxwell by Sir Brian Mahon provided a ray of hope on a horizon being darkened in November 1916 by the prospect of a severe potato shortage, by rapidly rising prices and by the continued delay in settling the claims for damages consequent upon the Dublin insurrection. John Dillon at the same time as he pressed the Government for the release of the internees moved to attack Sinn Fein. Replying to a resolution of confidence from the Swinford Rural Council he declared:

The insurrection was undoubtedly in large measure due to the application of the Coalition system of government to Ireland, the inclusion of Sir Edward Carson in the Cabinet, and the fatuous policy of distrust of the Irish people, and pin-pricking irritation directed against the Sinn Feiners and Irish Volunteers. None the less, the insurrection was an act of stupendous folly, for which there was no justification nor adequate excuse. It played directly in the hands of the bitterest enemies of the Irish National cause, and had for its main effects cruel and widespread suffering, martial law, and the establishment once more in full control in Ireland of the old Ascendancy gang represented by the "Irish Times" and the Kildare Street Club.\(^{283}\)

Securing the release of the internees was a popular objective of the Party and it momentarily boosted the Party's sagging prestige but if successful it also posed the threat of returning to an Ireland where conditions had not improved, where in fact in many ways they were getting worse, men whose

\(^{283}\)Ibid., 8 November, 1916.
feelings of deprivation and grievance were great. Internment had also provided a period during which such men concerted new plans of opposition, when new leaders such as Michael Collins emerged and where many who had not originally been sympathetic to the republican ideal were converted.

The first electoral test of the Irish Parliamentary Party's popularity following the Dublin rising occurred in the West Cork by-election in mid-November, 1916. The departure of General Maxwell earlier that month and the greater militancy displayed by the Party leaders had relieved some of the frustrations in Ireland and this by-election chanced to come up at a moment when Party fortunes in terms of popular esteem seemed to be on the rise following a long slump. There were three candidates: Daniel O'Leary for the Parliamentary Party, Frank Healy, who had been a Frongoch internee and had been released owing to ill-health, ran as an O'Brienite and a Mr. Shipsey who campaigned as a Sinn Feiner but was officially an independent candidate. The constituency was one where the O'Brienites were known to be popular and the Irish Party put on a strong campaign using the fact that Healy had been an internee in order to describe him as a Sinn Fein sympathizer. The tactic proved successful and the Party candidate topped the O'Brienite favourite by 116 votes. Mr. Shipsey barely made an impression obtaining only 370 out of 3,986 votes cast.²⁸⁴

This by-election demonstrated that in West Cork at least

to be described as a Sinn Feiner was a severe electoral handicap. The Irish Party seemed to be regaining control over the affection of Irishmen. Dr. O'Donnell, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Raphoe endorsed Redmond thus reducing somewhat the balance of clerical opinion which had been increasingly in opposition to the Party. But difficulties were soon encountered. The White Paper on Irish Recruiting which was published in mid-November revealed that fully one half of the voluntary recruits from Ireland came from the province of Ulster with the Belfast area supplying 180 recruits for every 100 from the Dublin area. This was bound to stoke the conscriptionist fires and Sir Edward Carson used the figures revealed in the White Paper to renew his call for conscription in Ireland. The Irish Parliamentary Party concentrated its efforts on achieving the repeal of martial law, better terms for Irish manufacturing, measures to ease the food shortage which was becoming manifest and the release of the internees. The Government seemed favourably disposed towards granting some redress in the matter of the distribution of War Office contracts and in late October Sir Maurice Levy was sent to Ireland to report on the feasibility of reopening the Irish Receiving Depot of the War Office which

286 Irish Weekly Independent, 18 November, 1916.
288 See Cork Examiner, 2 December, 1916.
had been closed in 1854.

Sir Maurice Levy's report was favourable to the re-opening of a Depot and he stated:

Personally, I am of opinion that the establishment of a Depot as desired would probably do much to remove some of the discontent existing in Ireland, especially if placed under the control of a sympathetic business man who would take an interest in imparting information to the manufacturers. It would undoubtedly bring increased prosperity to Ireland by increasing her manufactures.

The conclusions I have formed are:
1) that in the interests of the Empire it is desirable to encourage the stimulation and development of the manufacturing industries in Ireland.
2) that much greater use can be made of the industrial resources of Ireland.
3) that it is desirable to establish a Receiving Depot in Ireland.
4) that such a Depot should be in Dublin.
5) that the responsible official should be British, and a business man.
6) that the existing arrangements with the linen trade should not be disturbed except in the case of manufacturers who expressed a wish to deliver their goods at Dublin.289

This report generated high expectations on the part of Irish businessmen but when no action was taken on the recommendations of Sir Maurice Levy until the end of January, 1918 the original feelings of discontent were simply aggravated.

The fall of the Coalition Government in early December gave rise to further apprehensions in Ireland. One fear was that Sir Edward Carson would be included in the new Cabinet.290 The choice of a new Prime Minister seemed to lie between Bonar-Law and Lloyd George, neither of whom commanded Nationalist support. The departure of Asquith, weak though

289 Quoted in E. J. Riordan, Modern Irish Trade and Industry, op. cit., p. 203.
290 See Freeman's Journal, 5 and 7 December, 1916.
the Irish considered him, was a disaster from the Irish Parliamentary Party's point of view. The emergence of Lloyd George as the Liberal candidate for the post made it impossible in the light of the year's events for the Irish Party to deal on a friendly basis with either of the British parties and the new government was bound to be even weaker in its espousal of Home Rule than the Asquith Administration had been. The announcement that Lloyd George, widely perceived as the betrayer of Redmond, was to be Prime Minister and that Sir Edward Carson was to be the First Lord of the Admiralty seemed to seal the fate of Home Rule and to make unlikely the lifting of martial law. The Irish Party was left with two objects to be actively pursued: the easing of the food problem and the release of the internees. The first was very inadequately dealt with by the prohibition of the export of potatoes announced shortly before Christmas. The release of the internees, announced the following day, could only raise the level of discontent in Ireland in view of the apparent dashing of Home Rule hopes, the soaring cost of living, the continuation of martial law and all the other ills of Ireland.

It was now obvious, as Norman Cantor has pointed out, that "the English were visibly fumbling the Irish football". The Government was confronted with problems which appeared more pressing than the Irish question and Mr. Duke in announcing the release of Irish internees had said that the

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Government felt that the advantages of such a policy outweighed the disadvantages. The advantages which were sought were not in fact related to the Irish situation but to the war effort. The Government realized that the defeat of conscription proposals in Australia owed much to the hostility of the Irish community in that country. That hostility was due primarily to resentment of the treatment of Ireland by Britain and it was hoped that the releases would conciliate Irish-Australian opinion. The second advantage sought was a similar mollification of Irish-American opinion which bitterly opposed American support of Britain in the war.

The British Government's loss of interest in Ireland meant that the Irish Parliamentary Party lost its relevance in British politics and its ability to influence the Government. That ability had been its most signal advantage over Sinn Fein and the Irish Nation League but with this change in government the fact that it was the only political grouping with representatives at Westminster ceased to be an advantage and even became a disadvantage given Redmond's commitment to the war effort. English politicians gave up trying to conciliate Ireland. All their efforts to do so since the war began had given rise to severe strains within the coalition which could only impede the war effort. As long as Asquith had been Prime Minister he had maintained a moral commitment to Home Rule

293Cork Examiner, 22 December, 1916.
and to seeking a solution to the Irish question, now the new coalition was prepared to ignore Ireland, and in Ireland this contributed to the development of a climate of opinion which favoured the opponents of the Irish Parliamentary Party and of the British connexion. As a recent study of political violence argues,

As a government and its authority weaken, problems that governments should solve go untended with the development of distress; individuals and groups organize in order to protest and at the same time the government is unable to control or stifle them. Weakness thus not only encourages but it permits the growth of dissident groups, spawning a plurality of loyalties and chaotic interactions.\(^{295}\)

In Ireland the authority of the Government was weakened in the end by its abdication of responsibility for the situation which the passage of the Home Rule Act coupled with the toleration of Ulster unionist resistance had created. The release of the internees for reasons which were unrelated to the agitation of the Irish Party in the House of Commons was tantamount to saying that the rebellion in Ireland was of little importance next to the prosecution of the war. In Ireland it proved impossible to understand that if this was so, the arrests, martial law, and above all the executions could be justified. The release of the internees as a closing chapter in the history of the rising supports the judgment that in "the case of the Easter Rising the Government began by going forward with great confidence beyond the point whence retreat was possible and then determined very

carefully to pick its steps back again". 296

The leaders had been shot and now the followers were released, Home Rule had been described as imperative by a Prime Minister and martial rule persisted instead, the threat of conscription seemed far more real than the prospect of self-government and grave doubts were entertained on the ability of the Irish Party to stave off the one or to obtain the other, rising prices and agricultural disasters were more than wiping out the gains due to war production, John Redmond was isolated and Sir Edward Carson was First Lord of the Admiralty. Irishmen had cause to perceive a massive deterioration in their political situation since the high point of the years 1913 and 1914. The Easter Rising had been a significant accelerator in this process and the ham fisted response of the Government, while not unduly harsh, had been so inept that Irishmen easily perceived themselves maltreated once again. The major flaw in this response was inconsistency. First the leaders had been shot and thousands arrested, then their grievance had been recognized but not rectified. Now with that grievance still outstanding and with new grievances emerging, the Government was ignoring Ireland's demands, which it had found just, and releasing a large group of men whose anger and frustration had been exacerbated by detention and who had been given ideal opportunities to conspire in their camps. The semblance of civil government had been restored

but with Unionists at the helm and in practice martial law was retained. The year ended with Home Rule more in doubt than ever, with the Irish Parliamentary Party spent and discredited, with conscription and partition threatened and with the Government's legitimacy in doubt for an ever increasing number of the King's Irish subjects.